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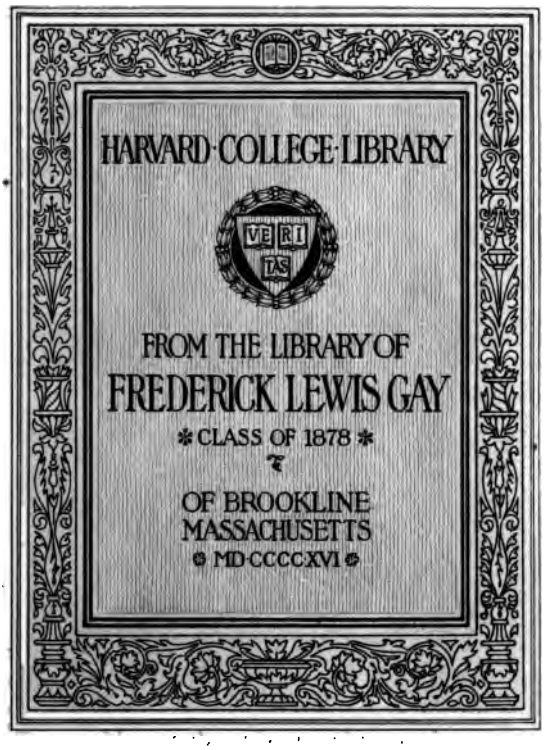
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CAPTAIN NELSON.

amuel Adams Drake has made a success-
ure in the field of historical novels. His
n Nelson" is a story of colonial days; it
a Boston in 1689, just before the deposition
dmund Andros. Nelson, the hero, is a fine
a patriot and an Episcopalian. That being
combination in those days, his patriotism
ubted and he himself very badly treated
stricter sort of anti-church men, but he
persecutions in a simple and gentlemanly
d came out of all his trials, and he had
nes for many a year, with no stain of
upon his honor. He was sent to Canada
eceful mission to Frontenac, but the mis-
iscarried and he was kept a prisoner at
and afterwards in France, where he
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, who seems to have had a special
for setting things right, and is
mirable figure in history, at last
lson's affairs in hand, and, in spite of
scene between them, was his friend, and
ce of Ryswick finished what the King had
Boston in rebellion, Castine and his In-
n the war-path, Frontenac in Quebec,
prisons and French courtesy, King Wil-
d a handsome, knightly hero, with his ad-
s in war and love, are abundant and
aterial for a romance, and Mr. Drake has
em generously and effectively. His "Cap-
lson" is a real man, and his picture of Bos-
he early part of 1689 a vivid historical

CAPTAIN NELSON

A Romance of Colonial Days

By SAMUEL ADAMS DRAKE

AUTHOR OF

"NOOKS AND CORNERS OF THE NEW ENGLAND COAST" &c.

NEW YORK

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS

FRANKLIN SQUARE

1879

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G. B. D.

TO YOU, MY DEAR GEORGE,

WHOSE EARNEST SYMPATHY AND ENCOURAGEMENT HAVE SO CONSTANTLY
ATTENDED ITS WAYWARD FORTUNES, THIS ENDEAVOR TO
REVIVE THE MEMORY OF A FORGOTTEN, YET
HEROIC, LIFE IS AFFECTIONATELY

Inscribed.

S. A. D.

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CAPTAIN NELSON.

CHAPTER I.

BOSTON IN 1689.

In the old days, when James the Second sat on the throne of England, Boston was the metropolis of the British Empire in America. Yet it was neither very populous, opulent, nor splendid. Little more than half a century had elapsed since its foundations were begun. Its inhabitants did not number eight thousand souls; its wealth, measured by modern ideas, was inconsiderable; its crooked streets contained neither palaces, cathedrals, nor costly mansions. Here and there a slender spire or modest turret thrust itself above the gray roofs; but neither dome nor minaret greeted the rising or the setting sun: nor did its earliest and latest beams caress, as now, the ancient symbol of Rome.

The triple crown of hills which dominated the peninsula rose above a motley collection of houses crowded along the strand or scattered upon the hillsides. Those by the shore indicated the commercial character of the place; those on the hills were the homes of the more wealthy citizens. Seen at a distance, the effect was sufficiently picturesque; the three little mountains had already taken a character agreeing with the needs of the plantation. On the green crest of the highest summit a tall shaft, *designed to give* timely *warning of the approach of* an enemy, was the conspicuous object, far and near. A second eminence, topped by a windmill, ascended at the peninsula's extreme seaward limit: a third, having its foot also washed by the sea, was crowned by a fortress, whose artillery swept the roadstead. The beacon, the windmill, and the fortress were thus the prominent landmarks of the town, and from them the hills of Tri-mountain were long familiarly distinguished.

We wish we might add that this primitive, this historical nomenclature had remained everywhere sacred; but in truth we cannot; for whether the sensitive ear of a later generation be offended with these reminders of so humble a beginning, or ignorant that greatness in the modern city is measured by the poverty of the original settlement, or careless if the names of streets, lanes, and highways were designed to perpetuate their free gift by the original owners of the soil, the descendants of the Puritans are fast eradicating all that the natural course of progress might leave them; so effectually, indeed, that we are justified in saying there is no longer any Tri-mount, except for the antiquary or the sentimental traveller. Our ancestors, it is true, might be ashamed of us; but then we have nothing to fear from them.

Between the windmill and the fort hills the shore curved boldly inward, enclosing within its crescent a natural

basin, in which the shipping rode. Stretching from point to point of the haven, and consequently from hill to hill, was a long sea-wall, or barricado, constructed as a defence against fire-ships, but furnished with openings through which vessels might enter or leave the inner harbor. At either end the barricado terminated in a battery, mounting a few culverins, which enfiladed the port. These warlike preparations, we are constrained to believe, were less formidable in reality than in appearance; but they served to secure the town against surprise by a hostile flotilla, and inspired confidence in the minds of the Bostonians themselves.

Besides this inner line of defence, on an island distant about a league from the town, was a fortress, commanding the only channel by which ships could approach the port. It had been erected at a very early day, by the first colonists, but much strengthened in later times, and was considered the key and bulwark of the place.

The Castle, as it was then and is still called, was a regular and well-built work of stone, with bastions at each of its four angles, and a formidable array of cannon on its walls. All vessels were required to lower their colors in passing; and such as were outward-bound to exhibit a pass, signed by the governor, before they could proceed to sea. As the captain of the Castle was expected to enforce exact obedience to these regulations, the approach to Stamboul was not more strictly guarded.

Behind all these fortifications extended the town. It consisted, at the time of which we are writing, of about two thousand houses, the greater part built of timber covered with shingles. Six times a year the two or three thousand men capable of bearing arms were summoned to the training-field for military exercise, when each citizen took his pike, his musket, or his sword, and repaired to his colors. Arrived at the rendezvous, every captain of a troop or a company called his soldiers to prayers; and prayer was again offered up at the conclusion of the parade. It was the same spirit which, somewhat later, animated the Covenanters, the invincible battalions of Cromwell, and so legibly impressed itself upon the military organization of the Swiss cantons, where a citizen may not marry who has not his arms, his uniform, and his Bible. "Solemn prayer upon a training-field," says an eye-witness, "I never knew but in New England."

Such being the military resources and spirit of the people, which the Indian wars had tended greatly to increase and exalt, it is our prerogative to push the spirit of investigation still farther, and inquire into the material condition of this patriarchal community.

Having saluted the Castle, passed through the redoubted barricado, and set foot on one of the little quays, at the head of the harbor-cove, we should find ourselves at the extremity of a broad street, conducting, by a gentle ascent, into the heart of the town. This street was not more than a musket-shot in length, unpaved and ill-kept, but giving unmistakable evidence of being a busy and much-frequented thoroughfare. It was filled with carts laden with merchandise; led horses and donkeys bearing panniers stored with the products of garden or farm; and a throng of pedestrians, who walked in the middle of the street, or gathered in little knots under the protection of the buildings.

At its upper end the street grew broader, terminating in the town market-place, where a building, situated exactly in the midst, turned the tide of

travel, passing beyond, upon either side. Let us halt here.

It was a sufficiently plain structure, furnished with a balcony, an exterior staircase, a sun-dial, and a belfry. The ground-floor, only partially enclosed, was reserved for the use of merchants of the town, who met here every day, upon 'Change, to buy and sell, discuss the news, or consult the notices affixed to the walls—then the only medium of public advertisement in the colony. It was therefore the business centre of the place.

Though so little imposing in appearance, the Town-house derived additional importance from its threefold occupation by the royal governor and council, the colonial judiciary, and the local magistracy. All proclamations were published from the balcony overlooking the market-place; all suitors at law, and criminals of every degree, ascending or descending the steps of its exterior staircase, were confronted by the stocks and pillory, which stood in convenient proximity to the halls of justice. Over the edifice, and symbolizing its relation to the parent government, the standard of England floated in the breeze. Here, therefore, was also the political centre.

It was, furthermore, the religious and geographical centre. Hard by, yet standing a little aloof from the contaminating contact of heretical rule, was the parent church, in which were so long united the powers of Church and State, but which now witnessed the final overthrow of the Old Theology, and the lasting subversion of its time-honored traditions.

From this focus the two great streets stretched away to the town's northern limit, where a ferry conducted travellers to the opposite shore of the river Charles, *and to the northern* seaboard *settlements, or to its southern* extremity, where the public gibbet creaked horribly in the wind, and the peninsula was contracted into a narrow isthmus, over which passed the single great road leading from the metropolis. Into these channels the tributary streets, lanes, or by-paths found their way, like mountain rivulets, by following the natural configuration of the ground; constituting altogether a tangled skein of thoroughfares, to which no stranger might trust himself without a guide, and which a hundred years' labor has failed wholly to unravel.

If its streets were so conspicuous an example of non-conformity with established canons of order, its architecture was the very embodiment of the Puritan idea that the trappings of a monarchy will set up a commonwealth. Here and there some householder had affixed his family coat of arms above his door; but such occasional adornment seemed put forth in a furtive sort of way, as inconsistent with the severe taste of the time, if not a censurable attempt to insult the public eye with empty pomp. Now and then one might see a many-gabled relic of the time of the first Charles, or of the succeeding reign, with its latticed casements, deep-throated chimney, and quaint carved ornaments; but houses which had sheltered John Winthrop and Harry Vane, which were as true types of English homes as their builders of English blood and brain, were already become anachronisms in the prevailing stiffness and homeliness which characterized the day of Dudley and Andros. Yet where Art stood naked without the gates, Nature would not be denied entrance. Within the town were many gardens and orchards, which, like rich embroidery, relieved the universal garment of sombre hue, and shed their blossoming fragrance abroad.

Though all callings flourished, and the mechanical arts prospered until the Revolution gave a serious check to them, Boston was essentially a community of traders. Its commerce, already important and far-reaching, was creating a class of merchants whose revenues flowed in from every coast. More than a score were esteemed worth from ten to twenty thousand pounds sterling. The great staples of New England — her fish, lumber, and rich furs—were exchanged for the commodities of Europe, the gold-dust, ivory, and slaves of Africa. These were, in turn, sold in the neighboring plantations. What the Jew said of Antonio might with equal truth be applied to the adventurous Bostoneer. Princely fortunes were amassed, mercantile dynasties founded, and luxury entered the Puritan capital. But notwithstanding the wealth acquired, primitive economy had stamped itself upon the manners of the people.

But at this period of her history, Boston, or rather New England, was to encounter a cruel reverse of fortune, from which her material interests did not easily or speedily recover. King James, by a long series of arbitrary acts, had alienated the affections of his subjects at home and abroad. His innovations upon religion and the constitution; the unparalleled hypocrisy of his policy; the cold selfishness and cruelty of his nature, alternately alarmed, disgusted, and incensed the English nation.

New England, which had so happily escaped the commotions incident to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and the Restoration, had never been so unsettled in her government, her religion, or her allegiance to the throne as during this disastrous reign. Her ancient and privileged charters had been *swept away, and the imperious* will of an absolute prince substituted in their stead.

In the Old Bay Colony every vestige of popular sovereignty disappeared. The House of Representatives was suppressed, the people crushed with imposts, and forbidden to assemble in town meeting to deliberate upon their grievances. They were imprisoned without trial, denied the right of Habeas Corpus, thwarted in their attempt to reach the throne by direct petition. In a word, the tyranny which, eighty-six years later, forever severed the political connection of the colony with the crown of England, was not half so insupportable or so monstrous as that which had now brought the people to the brink of rebellion.

But this was not all. The bewildered inhabitants who possessed their lands by purchase from the original inhabitants of the soil, who had received the solemn pledge of Charles II. that their rights of freehold should not be disturbed or impaired, were now told that their titles were invalid; and that the mark of an Indian sagamore was no more warranty than the scratch of a bear's paw. The work of universal spoliation began by the issue of writs of intrusion against wealthy landholders, and by the attempted confiscation of tracts held in common by the freemen of the towns.

The catalogue of oppression is not yet complete. Religious antipathies were revived and embittered. In Boston, the South Meeting-house had been entered and the service of the Church of England performed, in defiance of a protesting congregation. A portion of the ancient burial-place of the town was taken for the erection of an Anglican house of worship — it is presumed by order of the royal governor. Thus, no effectual means of wounding the susceptibilities of a proud and

sensitive people would seem to have escaped the invention of the dominant authority.

This power was, for the present, exercised by Sir Edmund Andros, Knight, and a council made up of various political and religious shades of opinion. Sir Edmund appears to have been chosen for the task of crushing out the too forward spirit of liberty in New England with the same infallible *coup d'œil* that discerned the special aptitude of the infamous Kirke and the rare endowments of a Jeffreys for the work of extirpating the unfortunate adherents of the Duke of Monmouth. As a soldier, he doubtless obeyed the commands of his royal master in governing New England like a conquered province; in obliterating or attempting to obliterate all traces of its ancient structure of government; and in the endeavor to establish on its ruins absolute and unquestioning submission to the will of the monarch. As a statesman, he signally failed to comprehend the spirit of the people, the tenacity with which they held to their ancient privileges, and the impossibility of reconciling them with a system so utterly repugnant to their religious and political education. To say all, Sir Edmund could level, but not rebuild.

His personal character was little calculated to soften the feeling of exasperation with which his administration was regarded. He was haughty, imperious, and choleric. He was an alien in religion and by birth. He had the brusque manners of a soldier who had spent half his life in camps, and who felt a soldier's contempt for the preponderance of civil authority. Otherwise he was a man of moderate ability, unquestioned courage, and sufficient education not to play his part of viceroy *ignobly. Perhaps his* greatest of*fence was in surrounding* himself with a coterie of hungry adventurers, who ground, impoverished, and insulted the people, constituting a petty court which was the feeble reflection of the effete and tottering throne of the Stuarts.

To maintain the authority of the governor, and at the same time overawe the people, the first body of imperial troops that had been quartered in the colony occupied the citadel; while a frigate of the royal navy lay moored within cannon-shot of the Town-house. The Castle was confided to the hands of an officer whom Sir Edmund deemed zealously attached to his sovereign.

Under these conditions, the people of New England heard, with a joy easy to conceive, that the Prince of Orange had made his ever-memorable landing at Torbay. In what manner the intelligence of weighty events is circulated without visible agency, must remain one of those mysteries that mankind regards with hopeless stupefaction, but is wholly unable to fathom. No public despatch, no private letter, no extraordinary courier heralded the news; nor could it be traced to any authentic source whatsoever. Yet it had crossed the seas, spread itself throughout the length and breadth of the colony, and was as universally believed as if its origin were positive, legitimate, indisputable. The people now awaited further tidings of events in England with feverish impatience. It is precisely at this moment that the action of our history begins.

CHAPTER II.

A BURIAL WITHOUT PRAYERS.

One chilly morning in February, 1689, a knot of mourners were gathered about an open grave in the oldest cemetery of Boston. Its silent inma-

seemed twice buried; once beneath the frozen earth, and once again beneath the snow which here and there disclosed the tips of moss-corroded stones protruding above its surface. A few melancholy fir-trees, crusted with hoar-frost, and looking like hearse-plumes, waved slowly to and fro when stirred by the breeze which now and then swept across the church-yard.

The bearers had laid the coffin on the bier, and the few spectators gazed in silence on the preparations to lower it into the narrow pit, when a man of middle stature, clad in a mantle that enveloped his figure from head to foot, approached the little group and advanced to the head of the grave.

All eyes were instantly bent upon the new-comer, who, after sustaining the examination with quiet dignity, and returning it with a glance of mild reproof, threw open his cloak and reverently uncovered. This movement exposed to view the canonicals of a clergyman of the Church of England, which had recently, under favor of royal protection, become rooted in the colony.

Paying no regard to the meaning looks, subdued whispers, or gestures of more unequivocal import which greeted his appearance, and manifesting no further sign of embarrassment than by a slight tremor of the voice, the rector of King's Chapel unclasped the bands of a richly ornamented Prayer-book and began the burial-service of his Church.

He had proceeded no farther than the impressive words, "I am the resurrection and the life," when an aged citizen, who seemed chief among the mourners, lifting his staff with a gesture not destitute of simple dignity, interrupted the speaker as follows:

"Stay, Master Ratcliffe; we would not hearken to printed prayers or witness profane rites; our departed brother *hath no longer need of thy ministrations*, and we do entreat thee to spare us, who heed them not, a larger delivery."

"Theophilus Frarye," mildly rejoined Ratcliffe, "the deceased was of the communion of our holy Church; it is therefore meet that I do mine office without more hinderance from thee: but if the blessed words I spoke but now offend, stand apart, I beseech you, for a brief space, and let this scandal cease."

"Stand thou apart, Sir Priest!" sternly retorted the old man, whose looks and speech announced him a link between the founders of the settlement and the new generation. "Dost thou seek in the midst of this hallowed dust to flaunt thy priestly robes and parade thy vain ceremonials? I marvel that the fleshless forms of those who fled the oppression of thine altars unto this wilderness, even as Israel out of the land of Egypt, do not arise to bid thee hence!"

"Peace, old man, peace! You forget that our gracious sovereign has vouchsafed his royal protection to such as cleave to our Mother-Church; you forget that the bloody rule of those you would summon is ended, and forever. Take heed, I say, ere it be too late, that the arm of flesh recall it not to thy failing memory."

"Wherefore do you presume thus to challenge this reverend man in the execution of his office?" interposed a Churchman, addressing him who was called Theophilus Frarye.

"Ay, wherefore?" said another voice, which indicated that the clergyman might, at least, count on a feeble support in this contest with the intolerant spirit of heresy.

"By virtue of the last testament of my deceased kinsman. See," continued Frarye, drawing a parchment from his breast, and holding it up to view, "it is

duly attested, and bears the hand and seal of Sir Edmund Andros. Here stand I to fulfil my covenant with the dead, were it till doomsday."

It was evident that the majority sided with Frarye, who, as legal representative of the unconscious cause of this altercation, might claim the protection of the law. But while he was much too wise to indulge the idea of an appeal to the justice of the present rulers, he was also too deeply concerned in upholding, at any cost, the principle of which he found himself so unexpectedly the champion, to yield an iota before the insidious advance of prelacy.

Ratcliffe began to lose his temper. "Deny the rites of Christian burial at thy peril!" he exclaimed.

"Persist in thy Popish mummeries at thine own!" returned his antagonist.

"In the name of the law, I adjure thee to be silent."

"In the name of the law, I summon thee to depart."

The by-standers threw uneasy glances at each other while Frarye held a brief conference with those who stood nearest him. A low murmur ran through the living circle which enclosed the grave and its destined tenant. At one end the clergyman maintained an attitude of unshaken resolution; at the other, his older, yet more impetuous, opponent remained as immovable as the head-stones of the cemetery.

"Hark ye, Master Ratcliffe," resumed Frarye, "we mean no discourtesy to thee or to thy cloth; but in the name of the dead man's kindred, who stand here by my side, I reject thine offices. Remain if thou wilt, or depart if it please thee better; but trouble us no further, or it may be the worse for thee."

Ratcliffe would still have persisted in his attempt to read the burial-service had not a clamor of angry voices that drowned his own compelled him, a second time, to desist.

"Shame on you, Sir Priest!" exclaimed a voice in the throng—for the little group now quadrupled its original numbers. "Is it not enough that you force your way into our meetings at the sword's point, but we must hear prayers whether we will or no? Shame! I say."

"Shame! shame!" echoed Frarye's partisans, in angry chorus.

"Ay," shouted a lank-visaged citizen, "show us thy warrant for the moiety of this ancient burial-place; verily, a most righteous foundation for yonder stately chapel!"

Ratcliffe bit his lip in silence. Even his art could not extenuate the twofold desecration which prompted these poignant questions. He conferred, hurriedly, with the few Churchmen who had instinctively gathered about him, as to the best means of withdrawing from the discussion with credit to himself. But, as inevitably happens, the choice was no longer in his hands.

One of his parishioners, carried away by anger, had the imprudence to shake his clinched fist, menacingly, in the face of the venerable patriarch, and to ejaculate in tones of withering contempt,

"Bah! ye craven churls! You will neither sell nor give us land: well, then, we take it, and defy you."

"Take it, then!" echoed a citizen, picking up a frozen clod and hurling it at the speaker with so just an aim that the unlucky Churchman, in endeavoring to avoid the blow, lost his balance, and fell sprawling into the open grave.

At this untoward accident a frenzy seized the crowd. "More land for the Churchman!" "Another glebe for the cathedral!" "A touch for the Evil!" "Dust to dust!" At each of the

outcries a hail of frozen turf fell on the unlucky wight, who in vain tried to extricate himself from the pit. Apparently, he was in a fair way of enriching the calendar of his Church with the name of another martyr, unless speedily relieved.

Astounded at the suddenness of the outbreak, Ratcliffe stood for a moment irresolute. But only for a moment. Regardless of personal injury, he sprang to the aid of the half-buried Episcopalian, and dragged him, bruised and bleeding, out of the grave. Sheltering the almost insensible victim under his robe, the clergyman raised his unemployed hand as if to invoke a curse upon his persecutors. Awed by his attitude, as much as by this act of devotion, the infuriated citizens stayed their hands, but stood glowering upon the little handful of Churchmen like wolves disappointed of their prey. The savage yells subsided into an angry murmur. One voice, indeed, cried out, "Down with them!" but no one stirred.

"Hold!" exclaimed Ratcliffe; "madmen that you are, if the Saviour came among you ye would cry, 'Crucify him!'"

The populace were now at white heat, and seemed disposed to decide the question at issue promptly and by the argument of force. The rain of projectiles which ceased when Ratcliffe came to the aid of his imprudent parishioner, was succeeded by a shower of vituperation and a volley of abuse which wounded even more deeply.

"Ho!" said a mocking voice, "a chirurgeon for this worthy man: he bleedeth."

"The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church!" whined a second through his nose.

Two men now approached carrying *a long wooden rail on their shoulders.* "Room there, room!" cried the foremost. "The worthy rector rides a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas à Gibbet. See, his palfrey waits."

The proposal was received with a burst of ironical laughter that made Ratcliffe tremble with rage and apprehension.

"Give him a canonical robe of tar and feathers!" suggested a dealer in ship-chandlery.

"Or a baptism in the Mill Pond!" squeaked a quavering treble, which proceeded from the lips of an ancient housewife.

"We shall never be quiet while any of that communion are left among us!" exclaimed another, shaking his head.

The murmur of assent which followed this sinister averment, and an ominous gathering of scowling faces nearer the spot where Ratcliffe stood, admonished the now thoroughly alarmed rector that it was time to look to his personal safety. One of his adherents attempted to steal away unperceived, with the intention of notifying the officer on duty at the Council-house; but the design was detected, and the messenger collared before he could gain the entrance to the enclosure. Ratcliffe began to doubt that the mob meant to exact signal vengeance for his ill-advised affront to their religious prejudices; but there was no craven blood in his veins. He put on his hat, shut the obnoxious Prayer-book, drew his cloak about him with deliberation, and calmly awaited the catastrophe.

Precisely at this conjuncture Ratcliffe's uneasy glance encountered that of a young and singularly handsome man, who had been an idle but not indifferent spectator of the later proceedings we have narrated. Ratcliffe instantly knew him for one of his flock. The recognition was mutual. The young man perceived the danger, and

understood the mute appeal of his pastor. For an instant he strongly felt the impulse to leave the clergyman to his fate; but the promptings of a noble nature prevailed. There was no time to be lost, or, rather, too much had been lost already. To force a way through the angry crowd demanded address and strength of muscle; but by the prompt exercise of both he succeeded in gaining Ratcliffe's side.

"For Heaven's sake," whispered Ratcliffe, "help me out of the clutches of these hungry wolves!"

"Hush!" muttered the stranger; "let me speak to them; but do not breathe a syllable or move a finger till I give the signal."

"Friends," said the new-comer in a manly and persuasive voice, "what is it you do? Will you bring a swarm of musketeers down upon you? On the word of John Nelson, I saw Master Randolph mount and ride toward the fort as I came hither. Are you ready to try conclusions with the king's troops? Bethink you, Master Frarye, how this tumult will speed your suit at Whitehall."

"We know you, Master Nelson," answered Frarye. "You also are of the Church of England. Be advised; meddle not with what concerns you not."

But the harangue, brief as it was, was not without marked effect upon the populace. Nelson had adroitly turned the attention from Ratcliffe to themselves. By this time the troops were, without doubt, in march; in ten minutes they would arrive at the cemetery. The people began to reflect upon the dangers of a premature struggle with the soldiery, which could only result in discomfiture, possibly in ruin to themselves and their cause. Those on the *outskirts of the* crowd stole *away one by one; and* although the greater number stood their ground, the impulse that had hitherto swayed them as one man was lost. The mass separated into groups, the groups into knots, thus opening a free passage through the hostile ranks.

"H'm, he says truly," thought Frarye; "strife with the troops may mean bloodshed. Tush! we are not quite ready for that." But, like an able commander, who evacuates a stronghold only when its possession is useless to his adversary, he determined not to quit the field without having vindicated the principle presented in his person. Addressing Nelson once more, "Doth Master Ratcliffe forego his design?" he demanded.

"He doth renounce it," said Nelson. Ratcliffe nodded in token of assent.

"Let him crave pardon of these offended mourners."

"He doth entreat it," replied Nelson; but as Ratcliffe made no sign except to cross his arms defiantly on his breast, his friend trod heavily on his foot. Ratcliffe again nodded, but his eye sparkled.

"I can endure no more," muttered the rector in Nelson's ear. "If that will not content them, let them do their worst."

Frarye waved his hand toward the entrance to the church-yard; Nelson passed his arm through that of the discomfited rector, and both walked unmolested through the throng. But when, at parting, Ratcliffe warmly pressed his deliverer's hand, "Be advised, sir," said Nelson, "against another such attempt. I would not answer for the consequences."

Theophilus Frarye and his friends performed the rite of sepulture, according to the simple custom of the day, without prayers. The crowd then quietly dispersed, and the cemetery resumed its ordinary appearance, except

that one hillock more rose the prominent object in its midst.

The old burial-place was, however, destined soon to witness another interment under conditions somewhat different from those we have chronicled.

Before the month was out, the mortal remains of Lady Andros were, with extraordinary pomp, deposited in the vault prepared for their reception. Ratcliffe read the burial-service with extreme unction; for this time a triple rank of musketeers stood between him and the gaping populace. More than one voice was heard to declare that the swift vengeance of Heaven had thus manifested itself within the household of the royal governor.

CHAPTER III.

THE RED LION TAVERN.

We must now ask the reader to accompany us into a region where the footsteps of the present generation seldom stray; but which, nevertheless, at the time our story runs, was the wealthiest, the most densely populated, and most seditious quarter of the town.

At this period there existed at the north end of Boston one of the few ancient taverns the ravages of frequent conflagrations had left unscathed. It stood near the entrance of a triangular space intersected by dark lanes, blind alleys, and ill-conditioned zigzags—suggesting cracks and rents rather than thoroughfares—yet imparting, withal, a certain character of independent self-direction, which impressed itself quite as legibly upon the religious and political as the topographical aspect of the neighborhood. The hostelry was also situated so near the water-side that the plash of the tides, beating against *the quays, was distinctly* heard through *its open windows. Its location*, therefore, offered peculiar advantages in the estimation of the seafaring or sea-subsisting population; and it enjoyed the custom of that class without a rival. A rusty sign-board above the entrance-door still displayed — though half a century's storms had sorely battered and defaced it — a rampant lion, the ancient symbol of the enfeebled empire.

The Red Lion was not merely an inn — it was a landmark. The dirty alley leading to the water was known as Red Lion Lane. The residents of the neighborhood were said to live near the Red Lion. Prize vessels and their cargoes, houses and lands, horses and negroes, were sold at the Red Lion by public vendue. Rumor also whispered that there was a subterranean passage beneath the house, conducting to low-water mark, through which silks, laces, wines, and rich stuffs passed without the knowledge of his majesty's surveyor and searcher of customs. As a point of direction, the tavern was much better known than the second church of the town, which fronted the upper end of the triangle; and, finally, any incident occurring in its vicinity—as a fire, an affray, or a homicide—was said to have happened near the Red Lion.

But, besides its intimate relation to the affairs of every-day life, the old inn was also known as the rendezvous of the hard-handed, hard-headed yeomanry of the North End; its tap-room as the political counterpart, or rather counterpoise of the saloons of the great houses, and in the present crisis as the hot-bed of disaffection. It is true that the North End has lost much of its ancient prestige; but, certes, it should be reputation enough, we think, for this single division of the town to have originated two revolutions!

On the night of the 4th of April, 1689, three men were seated near a table in the common room of the Red

Lion Inn. The countenances of all were gloomy and unquiet; their attitudes betrayed anxious preoccupation, and the glances which occasionally crossed each other sparkled like the contact of steel with steel. Some topic of more than ordinary interest had evidently been under discussion, but for the moment conversation had ceased, and each of the three seemed wholly absorbed in his own thoughts.

On one side of the apartment a vast chimney, red with the glow of half-burned brands, lighted the faces of the silent coterie, and threw three gigantic silhouettes upon the opposite wall. On the other side an inquisitive moonbeam stole through a crevice of the closed shutters, traversed the chamber at a single bound, and was shivered against an antique cuirass suspended above the chimney-piece.

The taciturn guests of mine host of the Red Lion, whose demeanor comported so little with the convivial traditions of the place, wore the ordinary dress of well-to-do citizens of the day: but the long sword which each carried indicated the union of citizen and soldier in a common personality. Such, in fact, was the semi-military character of Colonel Edward Tyng and Captains Alden and Molyneux of the Suffolk regiment of militia.

From time to time the look of one or another wandered toward half a yard of coarse yellow paper posted on the wall; and, had there been light enough, one might have read that all good and faithful subjects of King James were commanded on their allegiance to be watchful against any attempt by the forces or adherents of the Prince of Orange to invade the colony from without or excite disorders from within.

It is *doubtful how long* silence would *have continued, had not* a sudden gust which swept down the chimney, scattering the blazing embers on the hearth, roused the trio from their reverie. Tyng was the first to speak.

"This is indeed great news, and most fittingly published with a new act of tyranny. Master Winslow is cast into prison for bringing the prince's proclamation into the country. How say you? Shall he lie there like a dog, or are there brave hearts and willing hands to attempt a rescue?"

"By the bones of John Cotton," ejaculated Molyneux, "I hope this may prove true news, indeed! But it were best not to venture too rashly on an enterprise which, if it fail, will cause heads to fall as thickly as chestnuts in October."

"'If it fail!'" echoed the youngest member of the conclave. "The fiend take your 'ifs' and 'buts,' my dear Molyneux! I tell you, all England is in arms; while we, who have eaten the bread and drank the cup of humiliation until we are bursting with the fulness of wrath, have not dared to look our masters in the face. Pah!"—and he made a grimace of disgust—"not even honest Vyal's ale can wash down the taste that accursed oath of fidelity has left in my mouth."

"Gently, Master Firebrand!" rejoined Tyng, with a meaning look. "If the rapier you drew in Philip's war is not too deeply rusted for further service, I warrant you, ere long, suitable occasion to be at your favorite pastime of dealing sword-thrusts."

As if to reassure his superior on this point, Alden, with a grim smile, drew his rapier half-way out of the sheath.

"Excellent, captain!" resumed the old soldier; "your weapon is as free from rust as the Grand Seignor's, and as spotless as noble Sidney's: but take heed, I pray you, to the maxim, 'H

who draws his sword against his king should throw away the scabbard.'"

"With all my heart, so I may keep the steel," again interrupted the incorrigible Alden.

"It seems to me that you lose the application. But patience, still patience, captain. I hold Sir Edmund no poltroon, but a soldier of approved courage, who will exchange you blow for blow, and thrust for thrust, in good English measure."

"The sooner the better for my temper. The people are buzzing like angry bees over the stadtholder's proclamation. Let Bradstreet but give the signal, and we sweep the whole cutthroat crew into the harbor as easily as I could clear this table of pots and pipes."

"Halt there!" interposed Molyneux. "Suppose the signal given: there are the fort, the royal troops, the frigate, and the Castle. Let us begin with the fort, since it is there we must begin."

"It must be summoned in the prince's name. The proclamation hath already shaken the fidelity of the troops."

Molyneux nodded approvingly, then continued: "But suppose the summons is answered from the mouth of a cannon? You do not, I engage, expect the walls, like those of Jericho, to fall down at the sound of a trumpet?"

"Then it must be carried by escalade, or the garrison starved at more leisure."

"Ay, and in the mean time the guns of the fortress and the frigate will tumble the town about our ears or burn it over our heads. Seriously, on reflection, I prefer the assault."

"There I am with you. My company is ready to march at the first tap of the drum."

"*And mine.*"

"*Hold, young gentlemen!*" said Tyng, who had listened in silence to this dialogue. "Your zeal carries you away. Admit the fort taken, the garrison prisoners, since you answer for it, the frigate driven from the road or sunk at her anchorage, since you, Molyneux, undertake it; but how stands the business? The Prince of Orange has landed; but His Highness is not yet crowned King of England. God forbid that so noble an enterprise should miscarry! The event is in His hands. But should it so fall out, he who raises the standard of revolt will have a heavy account to settle with the victor. No, gentlemen, our cue is to watch and wait, while we stand armed and ready. Besides, you forget one thing, and yet that seems to me important."

"And what is that?" demanded his hearers.

"We yet lack a leader. The old governor hath no stomach for such rude work as you but now cut out so cleverly; the magistrates stand mute, but stir not; the ministers implore the aid of Heaven; but I doubt if prayers and exhortations prevail against bastions and lunettes. We have arms, munitions, and men; we lack a single man. We are a ship without a pilot, a body without a head, a torrent without direction; in a word, we want a leader. Find me the man, cool, prudent, brave, and I answer for everything."

A dead silence succeeded this decisive summing up. In vain the two captains ransacked their brains for an answer. Their blank looks announced the search a hopeless one. Molyneux remained silent; but Alden burst out with, "May I turn pirate and be preached to death by Parson Mather, if I can nominate your paragon!"

"He must be found," quietly urged Tyng.

The words had scarcely been spoken when the street-door swung back, and a man stepped lightly across the threshold into the apartment.

This was a man twenty-eight or nine years of age, tall, of graceful person, with dark and spiritual gray eyes, and expressive mouth. His black hair, glossy, abundant, and carefully parted at the middle of the forehead, fell negligently down his temples upon the collar of his mantle. His complexion was a little bronzed by exposure to sun and air. Between this man and the others was the apparent distinction of dress, manner, and physiognomy; but beyond this was that indefinable something which baffles analysis even while it announces an incontestable superiority.

Having politely saluted the three companions, who seemed no strangers to him, he threw himself carelessly upon a bench and called for a measure of canary. The innkeeper emerged from an obscure angle of the room, and having placed the wine before his guest, replenished the fire, and retreated to his corner without a word.

"Ha! Master Nelson," began Tyng, "you are late abroad to-night!"

"Ay," said Nelson, for it was our acquaintance of the burial-ground, "it is nigh midnight; but strange rumors are in the air, and I waited the breaking up of the Council."

"Hath the sitting ended?"

"No; the Council-chamber was bright with lights when I turned homeward. But you, gentlemen," pursued Nelson, in his turn, "you seem of one mind with myself. Hatching treason under the lion's claws, eh?"

Notwithstanding the careless tone and manner divested the question of offensive significance, quick glances passed between the officers. Neither seemed *disposed to renew* the discourse *Nelson's entrance had interrupted*; and the young man had too much tact to betray either curiosity or chagrin at the evident constraint of their manner. Conversation became general, but was pursued with little vigor on either side, and finally died out altogether.

Tyng then rose to his feet, adjusted his sword-belt, and fastened the clasp of his mantle. His companions closely imitated his movements, and the three, after paying their reckoning, turned to leave the room.

"Gentlemen," said Nelson, indicating the proclamation by a nod, "Sir Edmund enjoins on all officers and magistrates the instant seizure of such ill-advised emissaries of the Prince of Orange as may fall into your hands. Permit me to recommend the utmost vigilance on your part in the execution of these orders."

"Let him look to himself!" muttered Alden, under his breath.

Having shot this Parthian arrow, Nelson made a gesture of adieu, and the comrades quitted the Red Lion, leaving him alone with his reflections.

These could have been of no very agreeable nature; for, after intently gazing into the fire, as if to read his own destiny therein, he started to his feet and paced the floor with rapid strides.

"So," he murmured, "they deem me an object of suspicion, and avoid the contagion of my presence. It cannot be," he continued with increasing bitterness, "that Nelson, the Episcopalian, should at once be true to his religion and to his adopted country; that were impossible. The bigoted knaves! Why do I afflict myself with their wrongs, or trouble myself with their dreams of the future? why indeed? Yet I am much deceived if the crisis is not near at hand. But patience, John Nelson!" said the young man filling himself another glass of wine

"there is an old French proverb says, 'Everything comes to him who knows how to wait.'"

Having finished this monologue, Nelson's face resumed its habitual composure. He fell into a train of self-communion which conducted to a more pleasing conclusion—at least if one might judge by the smile that seemed to reflect his thoughts. But in the midst of this delicious abstraction he was rudely awakened by three heavy blows, that seemed to proceed from under the spot where he stood. He listened attentively, but the sounds were not repeated.

"Halloo, Master Vyal! a guest from below craves admittance. Is his Satanic Majesty a customer of yours, perchance?"

"'Tis that half-witted varlet of mine sounding a cask in the cellar," hastily answered mine host. "Ho, there! rascal!" he cried, stamping his foot thrice upon the floor; "get to bed, or look for a taste of rawhide, anon!"

Nelson remarked, though he knew not how to interpret it, the publican's evident confusion. He, however, made no further observation, and Vyal seized the moment to remind his guest of the lateness of the hour and the strictness of the town-watch, from whom he might at any moment expect a visit. Nelson therefore emptied his glass, and, throwing a piece of silver upon the table, quitted the house with a simple "Good-night."

As soon as he had gone, Vyal cast a searching glance up and down the deserted street. He then locked and barred the door, extinguished the lights, and by the aid of the fire-light began to grope about the floor on his hands and knees. He soon found the object of his search, inserted the blade of his knife in a crevice, and with its aid pried a small square of plank from its place. His hand then grasped an iron ring, which he lifted and let fall twice in succession. A moment of silence intervened, then a trap-door, situated exactly beneath the table, was cautiously raised from below, and a hoarse voice questioned,

"What's o'clock?"

"Time for work."

"All's right, lads!" said the first voice, speaking, apparently, to invisible listeners, and ending the colloquy.

The trap-door was lifted sufficiently to admit the body of a man, and the innkeeper disappeared in the opening. The aperture was then carefully closed, the noise of a bolt being shot into its place was heard, and profound stillness reigned throughout the inn.

Tyng, Alden, and Molyneux had stopped at a dozen paces from the inn-door.

"What think you of this Nelson?" demanded Alden of Tyng.

"He is not one of us; therefore not to be trusted."

"More's the pity. He is a gallant fellow; open-hearted, open-handed."

"The more capable of mischief to us."

"Is his name on the black list?"

"Not yet; but I count him among our adversaries."

"Decidedly; who is not for us, is against us. The signal?"

"Three strokes, repeated at intervals, on Dr. Mather's bell."

"The rendezvous?"

"Here, at the Red Lion."

"The watchword?"

"Orange."

The three plotters then separated, and in a few moments their footsteps died away in the distance.

Nelson, who heard the inn-door shut and fastened behind him, walked on at a moderate pace in the direction of his lodgings, but at the first turning he

plunged into a narrow way leading to the water. In five minutes he gained the end of a wharf which communicated, by the lane already mentioned, with the tavern he had just quitted. Here he ensconced himself in the shadow of a rickety shed and waited. Here and there the black hull of a vessel floated quietly at its moorings on the blacker surface of the haven. A sound like the fall of an oar echoed across the water. Nelson listened. In another moment a boat glided silently from beneath the wharf and steered for a small bark, which showed a single light in her rigging. In ten minutes a second boat, loaded to her gunwale, and rowed with muffled oars, shot out of the darkness, approached Nelson's hiding-place, and disappeared under the quay. Nelson perceived, during the instant that he held the boat in view, that the cargo was carefully concealed beneath a sail; but under a corner, which an awkward movement of the steersman exposed, his eye detected the glimmer of cutlasses and the sparkle of musket-barrels.

"Now, Master Vyal, I know your secret!" said Nelson to himself, while noiselessly threading his way out of the labyrinth of casks and lumber that obstructed the wharf. "I wonder what Sir Edmund Andros would give to know it?" he mused, while ascending the steps of his lodgings.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

For two or three days subsequent to the conference narrated in the preceding chapter a gale of unusual violence raged along the New England coast. The sea, roused by the tempest, beat with inexpressible grandeur on a hundred leagues of ragged ledges or ingulfing sands, breaking over its ordinary boundaries, inundating the level shores, and spreading ruin in the van of its resistless tide. No ship could put to sea or dared enter the port in the teeth of such a storm. The land, deluged with rain, and strewed with the wreck of forest and orchard, was swept twenty miles inland by the salt spray of the ocean. The great roads were deep with mud. Streams rose over their banks, bearing bridges, uprooted trees, hay-ricks, and animals in their whirling waters. The colonial capital, completely isolated from the main by the free passage of the sea over the narrow strip of land which joined one with the other, was, in effect, an island surrounded on all sides by foaming waves. At such a time few cared to be abroad, and even well-travelled routes were deserted.

This season of respite was improved by Sir Edmund in settling plans against a sudden uprising of the populace, and an extraordinary session of the Council had been convoked to deliberate upon those measures which the gravity of the situation seemed to demand.

Just behind the governor's chair a pair of halberds were crossed above a shield, on which the arms of Britain were carved. On either side of the apartment portraits of the old Puritan governors looked down from the walls with an indignant stare. Crossing an antechamber, in which a messenger received such as might be summoned before the Council, a narrow passage led to the balcony and to the exterior staircase already mentioned. In this passage an armed sentinel paced up and down, thinking of his home in Merrie England, and inwardly cursing the thickness of the walls which prevented his hearing more than the confused murmur of voices within. On looking over the balcony, a platoon of soldiers, wit

a subaltern in command, were seen mounting guard in the street below, where they enlivened the tedium of duty by worrying a poor devil locked in the stocks, who bore their abuse with stolid unconcern.

For the first time since the revocation of the colony charter the Council was unanimous, and yet it had never seemed half so weak when embodying an opposition. Lacking this essential and animating principle of a deliberative body, it degenerated into a spiritless, passive instrumentality, which originated nothing, decided nothing, and was valued at less than nothing. Still, it was not the less detested on that account.

At the head of the board sat a man turned of fifty, but still in the prime of a vigorous manhood; at the foot, one somewhat younger was busy with a mass of papers, on which he made occasional notes. The intermediate space was filled by half a dozen councillors and twice as many vacant chairs, whose habitual occupants were absent from the sitting, and whose emptiness signified that the divisions of the people had found their way into this chamber. In the temporary lull that prevailed, these vacant chairs seemed to enter a silent but emphatic protest against the acts of the minority. The members present seemed, on their part, to interrogate the seats as they had been accustomed to interrogate the faces of the absentees.

The two men at either end of the table were both in appearance remarkable, but the one sitting lowest was something more. You would have looked once at the governor and twice at the secretary. In fact, one would have said the two personages had changed places—that the secretary *should have occupied* the seat of honor, *and the governor* the chair of the secretary. Sir Edmund Andros looked like a man who would have received a bullet in his heart, crying, "God save King James!" Edward Randolph, like one whom it would be dangerous to thwart, impossible to esteem, and to whom pity or remorse were equally unknown. And yet there was something antique in the high forehead, Roman nose, and strong chin—something that attracted at a first glance; although the unfathomable depths of the dark eye, the habitual sneer on the thin lips, as instinctively repelled at a second. His malevolent persecution had already gained for him the sinister title of evil genius of the colony. He was ambitious, audacious, and capable; he was astute in council, implacable in his hostility to the Puritan idea of government, tireless in the pursuit of a purpose or a victim. He was a Jesuit in duplicity, an Indian on the traces of his enemy, a Corsican in revenge. Sir Edmund was only a man of talent; Randolph was a man of genius. Sir Edmund was the gilded figure-head; Randolph the unseen helm that guided the Ship of State. Certes, it is perhaps just as well that the respective positions of the two were what we find them, since time has in no way mitigated the sentence of contemporaneous history, which a wiser generation delights to impeach if it may not reverse.

"Gentlemen," began the governor, "we are few in number"—and here his cold blue eye rested on the vacant seats with a look the recalcitrant councillors would not have cared to meet—"but strong in the purpose to maintain and defend the rights of the King's Majesty; and though his realm is traitorously beset by enemies—whom Heaven confound!—and his very crown in jeopardy, yet will he know how to requite your faithful service when the times have bettered. Believe me, gen-

tlemen, the boldest measures are the safest. If we show a faint heart now, we shall hardly ride out the gale. For mine own part, sirs," said the knight, with deep emphasis, "I have sworn to hold the town of Boston for King James; and if I hold it not while a single soldier obeys my orders, may my name perish, my escutcheon be hacked in pieces, and my brow bear the brand of eternal infamy!"

The impetuous ardor of the knight communicated itself to his hearers. With one impulse the councillors rose to their feet and demanded to renew their oaths of fealty to King James. The oath was administered with unusual solemnity, each councillor laying his right hand upon the Bible while the knight repeated the formula.

"It is well," he said, when the members had taken their seats; "and now let us proceed to business."

"Please your excellency," said the secretary, "I have three proposals to offer the honorable Council."

"We will hear the first; eh! gentlemen?"

"It is a general disarming of the disaffected: having drawn their teeth, let them bite if they can."

"A desperate expedient, your excellency, for which we lack a precedent," observed a councillor.

"Excuse me," answered Randolph, "but we have their own warrant for such procedure."

"How say you, Mr. Secretary?"

"I say that in the first decade of the colony there was a fantastical religious contention in this good town of Boston which threatened to split the whole Puritan fabric asunder. One faction was led by an Amazonian disputant, one Mistress Anne Hutchinson, the other by the governor himself. Governor Winthrop's *faction* was the stronger; *the followers of Jezebel* were disarmed, and their priestess banished out of the jurisdiction."

"But," objected the councillor who had spoken before, "that was a family quarrel, and touched not the authority of the Crown."

"I hold it a good precedent," urged Randolph. "But, precedent or no precedent, it is no time for half measures."

"It is a violent step," said a second councillor. "I like it not."

"Dangerous," observed another.

"A brand in the thatch of every roof in the colony," ejaculated another.

"Yea; and when thy neighbor's house is on fire, look out for thine own," suggested another.

There was a general shaking of wigs around the board. The measure was clearly unpopular.

"Let us pass to your second proposal, Mr. Secretary," said the governor, gloomily.

"Here it is: Your excellency shall summon the inhabitants by proclamation to renew their oaths of fidelity to King James. The loyal will gladly obey; the disloyal durst not refuse, or if they do they are marked men. The timid dare not perjure themselves, for scruple of conscience. Your excellency may deal with the traitors who neglect the summons."

"Most impolitic, your excellency, to bring the people in a concourse together. A spark would suffice to set the whole in a blaze together. 'Tis our cue to maintain the *status quo*, not to cast defiance in the teeth of the Orange faction. And for the disloyal, we know them but too well already."

A general wagging of heads in emphatic approval followed the councillor's opinion. Had the opposition been in their seats, it is probable partisan feeling or heated discussion would have secured for each of Randolph's measures the unanimous support

those now seemingly combined in the endeavor to thwart them. The vacant chairs, it will be perceived, were still the ruling majority.

"Well, sirs," interposed Sir Edmund, with a shade of irony in his voice, "since these measures like you not, let us hear the secretary's third and last proposal."

"Peradventure, your excellency," resumed Randolph, "it may like them as little as the others, but thus it is: Seize the persons of the ring-leaders in fomenting rebellion; convey them on board the frigate, to be kept as hostages for the good behavior of the town, or until His Majesty's pleasure shall be known."

A feather could have been heard to drop in the chamber when Randolph ceased. He had reserved his strongest card for the last play. The councillors looked at each other in blank amazement; but before any could find his voice, the knight smote the table with his hand and exclaimed, with vivacity, "'Tis well thought of. A bold stroke will strike terror in this nest of traitors, and sow confusion in their councils. God's life, gentlemen, I like the plan: there's mettle in it."

A noise of feet and rattle of arms were heard in the antechamber. "Without there!" exclaimed the governor.

The door was opened by the usher.

"Who waits?"

"Captain George and Captain Trefry attend your excellency."

"Admit them."

The officers entered the chamber, made a respectful inclination to the governor, and waited in silence until he should address them.

"Ha! gentlemen, you are welcome. We have sent for you that you may acquaint the Council with our means *of defence, should* rebellion raise its *head within our government.* Speak, Captain George; we have much dependence in thee."

"By your excellency's leave," returned the person addressed, "in that case I should put a spring on my cable, open my ports, and cannonade your rabble with the greatest pleasure imaginable. And provided they did not all run away out of reach of my balls, you should presently see a deputation of the cringing rogues sue on their knees for such terms as your clemency might vouchsafe."

"Bravely spoken! And should we meanwhile wish to commit some of these misguided Bostonians to your charge?" said the governor, with a meaning look.

"They shall be welcome on board the *Rose.*"

"You will answer for them?"

"I will not part with one of them save at your excellency's bidding."

"Not excepting Parson Mather?" interrogated Randolph, with a diabolical grin.

"Except nobody, Mr. Secretary. Should his excellency send me Satan himself, I will clap him under hatches. If he does not find himself at home among the *Rose's* crew," added the bluff sailor in an audible undertone, "he must be a difficult devil, indeed."

An audible titter passed round the board. Even Sir Edmund's stern features relaxed.

"Very good, sir; we understand each other," he said, smiling grimly.

"Has your excellency any further commands?"

"I would confer with you after the sitting, and so crave your company to dine with the Council, at Monk's, at two of the clock."

"I will not fail to attend their honors."

The captain of the frigate carried his laced hat to his head with a not

ungraceful sweep of the right arm, bowed, and left the Council-chamber.

"And now," resumed the governor, "what say you, Captain Trefry? Do you answer as hardily for the fidelity of the king's troops?"

"Your excellency may rest easy on that score."

"So that you stand ready to obey any order I may give?"

Trefry bowed, in assent.

"You hear our purpose to attach the persons of some eminent conspirators of the prince's faction. To you is confided the execution of the design. You must be swift and secret."

Trefry again bowed, without speaking.

"How many men do you require?"

"How many am I to arrest?"

"Three."

"Thirty men will be enough; ten for each detachment."

"Take sixty, and make it doubly sure."

"If your excellency pleases, I would prefer the smaller number."

"As you will, so the stroke fail not. And now return to the citadel; there await our orders."

"If it is your excellency's command."

"How, sir! you do not seem to relish the commission."

"It is not for me to dispute the orders of your excellency."

"Speak out, man! what mean these accursed iterations?"

"Simply, that to the best of my belief not one man of the detachment will return to the fort alive."

The councillors exchanged meaning looks. A red spot began to appear on each of the knight's cheeks. "By God, sir," he exclaimed, with heat, "I begin to doubt you are afraid of these rascal Bostoneers!"

The captain's cheek burned, but he *smothered his wrath* until Randolph arose and demanded Sir Edmund's leave to lead the soldiers. It then broke through all restraint.

"Stick to your goose-quill, Master Secretary, and leave cold iron to those who know how to handle it!"

"Be not hasty, valiant sir," rejoined Randolph, in a tone of mockery that made the officer grate his teeth with rage. "I pray your excellency," he continued, "to bestow my office of secretary upon Captain Trefry until these unhappy dissensions are past."

"I have half a mind to grant the petition," answered Sir Edmund, shaking his head.

Trefry unbuckled his rapier, and flung it upon the table with such violence that the steel escaped from the sheath and fell ringing upon the floor. "Take my sword, sir," he stammered, "since you deem me no longer fit to command; and for the secretary, give him a mask, a dagger, and a disguise."

"How mean you, sir?" exclaimed Randolph, turning fiercely upon Trefry.

"That you better know how to stab in the dark than to measure steel with a loyal adversary."

The two men looked as if they would have sprung at each other's throats. All the councillors were upon their feet, and a collision seemed imminent, when Sir Edmund exclaimed, in a voice of thunder, "Hold, on your lives! The first that advances hand or foot I will strike him dead with my own hand! Your seats, sirs! Take up your sword" (to Trefry), "and you, Mr. Secretary, keep a more civil tongue. How's this? Have we not foes enough, but you must fall a brawling among yourselves? Shame on you both! You, Trefry, take up your sword," he again commanded; "we have seen you use it valiantly. You, Randolph, resume your pen, 'tis your proper weapo

And now bethink you in what audience you are."

The knight's voice and gesture of authority restored order within the chamber. Randolph resumed his seat, and Trefry picked up and buckled on his sword. "I am ready to obey your excellency's orders to the letter," he said; "only—" and he paused as if awaiting permission to speak further.

"Well, sir," said the knight, divining the wish.

"I desire your excellency's instructions in writing."

"Zounds, sir!" exclaimed the governor, "you are over-scrupulous, methinks. Mr. Secretary, an order to our trusty and well-beloved Arthur Trefry, in the king's name to attach the persons of Samuel Bradstreet, William Stoughton, and Cotton Mather."

Randolph wrote the order. He then passed it to the governor, who signed and handed it to the officer, saying,

"And now, sir, we rely on your discretion and zeal for the king's service. Let the affair be concluded with as little noise as possible, and give timely notice to us when your prisoners are safe within the fort."

Trefry put the order in his belt, saluted, and left the room without speaking. The sentinel, who for the moment replaced the door-keeper, and whose ear had been glued to the key-hole, was near falling headlong into the chamber by the sudden opening of the door.

"What are you doing there, rascal?" angrily exclaimed the captain, shutting the door behind him.

"Only buttoning my gaiter, your honor," replied the soldier, making an effort to recover an erect position.

Trefry gave him a sharply suspicious look before he strode down the stairs, his sword banging on every step. *At the corner of the building* a servant held his horse by the bridle. Trefry put his foot in the stirrup and hesitated. "I wonder if the rascal was playing the spy?" thought he. "Bah! no matter. His throat as well as mine will be cut to-morrow. A pretty business this of Sir Edmund's! Arthur Trefry turned bailiff! Damnation!" And with this objurgation the captain leaped into his saddle, dug the spurs into his horse's flanks, and rode straight to the fort.

The session of the Council was not prolonged. A second order was sent to the captain of the Castle, commanding him to detain all inward-bound vessels until their papers could be examined and their passengers interrogated. It was agreed that, in case of an alarm, the friends of the government should assemble at the Council-house with their arms. Should this be found impracticable, the fort was named the rendezvous. These details being settled, the knight rose to prorogue the sitting.

"One instant, your excellency," said a councillor. "It is meet we consider what to do should certain intelligence arrive that the Prince of Orange triumphs."

"Stand fast for King James until the Parliament of England absolves us from our allegiance," replied the knight, haughtily.

"Burn the accursed town, and sail away in the smoke for France!" whispered Randolph in his ear.

Without seeming to heed the suggestion, the governor declared the Council adjourned. He unhooked his rapier from the back of his chair, drew on his embroidered gauntlets, and, followed by the members, passed out of the chamber leaning on Randolph's arm. The guard paraded, the officer put himself at their head, and the whole took the way to the Anchor Tavern, where a substantial dinner at the public expense

awaited them. Let us leave them to forget the perplexities of office while discussing the smoking joints and sound wines of mine host.

After the departure of the governor and his retinue, the sentinel who had excited Trefry's suspicions came out on the balcony. He was apparently expecting the return of the escort, to be relieved from his post of duty. Seizing a moment when the neighborhood was deserted, unobserved he took a scrap of paper from his waistcoat pocket, a bullet from his pouch, and carefully wrapped the paper around the missile. He then gave three blows with the butt of his musket to attract the attention of the culprit who sat in the stocks, and seeing that the latter observed him attentively, tossed the bullet in the air. It fell so near the prisoner's feet that he might easily have picked it up had his hands been at liberty. He, however, nodded his head in token of acknowledgment.

The sentinel was relieved, and marched away with his comrades. The jailer came and released the prisoner, surlily bidding him go about his business and mend his ways. The latter, after chafing his limbs and stamping his feet, to restore the circulation, picked up the bullet as soon as the turnkey was out of sight, and took to his heels in the direction of the North End.

A little after midnight three bodies of soldiers left the fort, taking different routes. They marched swiftly and silently, but notwithstanding these precautions neither of the persons named in the order of arrest could be found. Trefry was compelled, after a protracted but useless search, to draw off his men, and to notify the governor that the attempt had failed.

CHAPTER V.

FOR LOVE, OR FOR COUNTRY?

From this memorable sitting Royal Erving, a member of His Majesty's Council, was wending his way homeward in a fit of deep abstraction. He was a merchant of considerable fortune, a strenuous defender of the royal prerogative, and a stanch Episcopalian. Apart from his convictions of loyalty to his prince and to his religion, the natural bent of his mind favored the preservation of existing order as opposed to political reaction and possible anarchy; his conservatism being that of wealth and property, which regards revolutions with instinctive abhorrence as their natural and implacable enemy. For the rest, his known aversion to coercive measures, his affable manners, his uprightness, had won for him the respect of his fellow-townsmen, who could not refuse their esteem, much as they detested his principles.

The storm had spent itself; the sun broke through the gray clouds, and the peace of nature seemed to prefigure that of man.

The councillor pursued his way through the Prison Lane, and, turning to the left, stopped before a mansion situated on the grassy slope of the hillside, which here, rising to a commanding height, overlooked the roofs of the town, the island-strewed harbor, and a glistening stripe of blue sea beyond. It was a solidly built stone structure, turreted with a single chimney, from whose crater-like throat crept a thin plume of smoke. The only attempt at external decoration was an iron balcony curiously wrought with the monogram of the present owner, and a horseshoe, in bass-relief, on a sunken panel of the chimney. Behind the house the ground rose in terraces, on the highest of which perched a diminutive summer-house

whose unique ornament, a gilded grasshopper, performed the office of a weather-vane.

Pushing open a gate, the councillor crossed a garden green with freshly springing turf, and vocal with twitter of birds in the budding tree-tops. But neither the beauty of reviving nature nor the melodious solicitation of these heralds of spring could lift him out of the despondency into which he was plunged. It was only when three strokes of the brazen knocker, dealt from force of habit, echoed through the quiet street, that he aroused from his stupor, sighed deeply, and, shaking his head with the air of a man who gives up a knotty question unsolved and unsatisfied, perceived that he stood on the door-stone of his own house.

The door was opened by a negro, who, after taking his master's hat and cane, beat a hasty retreat to the regions below stairs.

Hardly had Councillor Erving adjusted his full-bottomed wig, pulled down the lappels of his waistcoat over an abnormal upheaval of exuberant paunch, and heaved a second sigh, more profound than the first, when a soft and musical voice caused him to turn his head and relax the rigidity of his features.

"Dear father," said the voice, from the top of the staircase, "welcome home. Thou art but a naughty parent to tarry so long at that musty Council; but I shall chide you as you deserve."

With this threat on her lips, a young woman ran lightly down the stairs, and, putting two white and beautiful hands upon the old man's shoulders, imprinted a kiss upon each cheek.

"I bear thy reproof meekly, my child," said her father, patting her head; "but deal not too hardly with an *old and broken man.*"

The girl tossed her head archly. "Is the punishment too great? well then, I pardon you the rest of the sentence, upon promise of amendment;" then seeing the careworn look steal again into the old man's eyes, "What is it that troubles you, father? is there more ill news?" she added.

"None, Lois: that is, none that is public; but the air is filled with rumors, and the silence of the people is too like that which precedes the coming storm."

"But, father, if they are silent it is because they are afraid to raise the hand of rebellion. Would you rather they were in open revolt?"

"Not so, my child: yet this ill-omened stillness bespeaks preparation, confidence, I know not what: they bide their time; and the time, I fear, is not far distant. Neither petition nor remonstrance were presented in Council, which means that the people are now the masters, and we are their servants."

"Servants, father!" haughtily exclaimed the girl. "What mean you?"

"Ay, servants. Sir Edmund is overconfident, and bears a bold front; but he mis-estimates his strength, if he thinks to overawe this people with a handful of the king's troops."

At this moment the black announced that dinner was served, and father and daughter entered the dining-hall and seated themselves at the table. After a somewhat lengthy grace, the repast began; but after a silence of two or three minutes, devoted by each to his or her own thoughts, Lois looked up:

"Father," she said, "it is for me you are so deeply concerned; do you then fear for our safety?"

"I do not disguise from you, my dear, that the matter is becoming so serious that I think it were best you should leave town until peace and quietness is restored."

"Willingly, father, since you wish it. When shall I go?"

"This very night. Giggles shall accompany you to your uncle's at Braintree."

"But do you not mean to go with me?" questioned Lois, in a tone of surprise.

"I cannot: duty forbids. It must not be said that Royal Erving fled, like a frightened hare, at the approach of danger."

"Then I too will remain."

Royal Erving looked at his daughter with unfeigned astonishment. Until this moment she had never questioned his commands or thwarted his will. "How is this, girl!" he exclaimed; "you will not go!"

"Not without you, dear father: if duty to your king keeps you at the post of danger, my duty to you tells me not to leave you alone; and leave you I will not. Do not urge me, for I am resolved not to go unless you go with me." This was said in a tone which left no doubt of the maiden's determination to be as good as her word.

Erving's broad face reddened with anger. He frowned until his grisly eyebrows met, pursed up his mouth, dropped his fat chin on his breast, and fixing Lois with a look of peculiar meaning, "Are you quite certain, my mistress, no other reason moves you thus to disobey a father's commands?" he asked.

The councillor had tried to render his countenance awful and his voice severe, whereas the one was comically distorted, and the other only lugubrious. But Lois felt no impulse to laugh. The color stole into her cheeks, and her eyes grew moist even while she bravely withstood the look. With a steadiness which exacted all her self-control, she said,

"You are cruel, sir. Who is there in the wide world to care for you but me? and me you would chase away at the moment trouble threatens. Am I then so useless a thing as to be packed off like the family plate, and kept under lock and key till danger is over? Father, I am no longer a child! I am a woman and an Erving! This house is your castle, and Giggles and I its garrison. Let me see who will dare cross the threshold while one of its defenders is left alive!"

"The devil!" thought Erving; "what an Amazon these accursed times have made of my gentle Lois!" The councillor was mistaken—Lois was in love.

"Be it so, then. Remain if you will; but remember it was your own choice. The spirit of rebellion waxes bold indeed when it hath entered this house. We must look to it. Hath Master Nelson been here to-day?" said the councillor, carelessly, but regarding Lois out of a corner of his eye. Lois replied, with affected unconcern, in the negative; but she became deeply attentive.

"H'm! 'tis time that young gentleman ceased to be the enigma he is."

Lois made no reply. She was thinking that to her, at least, Nelson was no enigma.

"Yes," pursued the councillor, "'tis fitting that men declare themselves in times like these; and what does he? secludes himself; puts on a mantle of mystery; pretends to stand neutral; treats the advances of our friends with coldness, or parries them with a jest. Seriously, Lois, Nelson's conduct disturbs, it alarms me."

"Surely, father, you do not doubt his loyalty? He hath too lofty a spirit to cast his fortunes with the fanatical rabble."

"I doubt every one who wears a mask."

"On my life you wrong him! his education, his religion, his—"

"His love, you would add, since he professes it so earnestly," finished the councillor, seeing that his daughter hesitated, blushed scarlet, and came to a full stop in her plea. "But there is something more potent than education, stronger than religion, more puissant than love."

"Something more potent than love!"

"Ay, girl, ambition."

Lois's little foot beat an impatient measure upon the floor. Her large blue eyes dilated with amazement: her lips seemed to repeat the incredible assertion slowly to herself, and to reflect the answer of self-conscious integrity in an incredulous smile. It was easy to see how deeply the truth of her own nature resented so much as the implication of her lover's infidelity to the purest and holiest sentiment with which heart of man can be endowed. Ambition more powerful than love! Her soul revolted at the monstrous heresy. The voice of her lover seemed calling her to the rescue. Trembling, indignant, and beautiful, she turned upon the wicked calumniator.

"We are betrothed, sir!" she cried. "Would you make me despise the man I love? Father, you do not know John Nelson! I will answer for his truth as for my own."

"'Tis easily said," replied the unmoved councillor. "But listen to what I shall tell thee, even if the precepts of worldly wisdom confound thy inexperience and revolt thine honest nature." The councillor settled himself in his chair, cleared his throat, and went on. "In the year 1656, Sir Thomas Temple, a kinsman of Lord Say, having obtained, with others, a patent of Acadia from Cromwell, purchased of Stephen *La Tour all the rights* which he inherited to that country from his father, the Sieur Charles de La Tour. Sir Thomas sailed for New England the following year. He assumed the government of his province, which he conducted with so much ability, prudence, and moderation as to gain the love of the people, the good-will of his neighbors, and the approbation of the Lord Protector. Do you follow me, Lois?"

"I do, sir; but to what does this history conduct?"

"You shall see anon. Upon the restoration of the Stuarts, Sir Thomas was again commissioned governor of Acadia; but by the peace of Breda this province was ceded to France, and became again French territory. You understand that Sir Thomas was not only lord proprietor of the soil of Acadia by purchase, but held its government for the crown of England?" Lois nodded, without speaking.

"Well, he was required to surrender his proprietary title and his government at the same time. A great injustice, you will say; but the rights of individuals must give way to the exigencies of public policy," said Erving, in his most official tone. He then resumed. "Sir Thomas was promised, by a clause of the treaty, an indemnity of £16,000. The rendition of Pentagöet* was demanded by the French envoy, the Chevalier de Grand Fontaine, in the name of His Most Christian Majesty. As the possession of Pentagöet was worth 80,000 livres of yearly income, Sir Thomas refused to yield it up on the chevalier's demand, until the indemnity secured him by the treaty should be paid. A man of great firmness, Sir Thomas! but a royal order forced him to submit."

"But the indemnity was paid?" interposed Lois.

"Not a farthing of it. Chagrined,

* The present site of Castine, Maine.

impoyerished, and stung by the injustice of his sovereign, Sir Thomas determined to retire to French territory. His overtures were well received by Monsieur Colbert; King Louis granted him letters of naturalization, and commanded the Lord Intendant of New France to assure the disseized baronet that he would bestow still greater favors. Sir Thomas did not, however, carry his intended expatriation into effect. Perchance there was one title he was not yet prepared to renounce—that of Englishman. He soon went to England, where he laid his suit before the king in person, but to no purpose. That very year he died, bequeathing his suit and his wrongs a legacy to his heirs."

The councillor paused, and wiped his forehead. Lois, in spite of herself, had been deeply interested in the relation. She now interrogated her father by a look that he rightly interpreted.

"How, you would ask, does this history affect the destinies of Master John Nelson and Mistress Lois Erving?"

Lois signified by an inclination of the head that he divined her thought.

"Nelson is the nephew and heir of Sir Thomas Temple."

Lois had listened to the recital with her elbows resting upon the table and her hand supporting her chin. She leaned back in the chair and eagerly awaited the sequel.

"Nelson," resumed her father, "hath not ceased to press the claim for indemnity; but His Majesty turns a deaf ear to his petition. He hath a proud spirit, this Nelson; you yourself have said so. Perchance a change of dynasty" (and here the councillor nodded significantly) "might bring a change of fortune. Peradventure a claim on the gratitude of the Stadtholder might effect what *twenty years of* prayer and *petition have failed to accomplish.*"

Lois made a movement as if she would have spoken, but a sign from her father checked the intention. He filled a glass with canary, for his long speaking had parched his throat, held it between him and the light, and, with one eye closed, appeared to interrogate the invisible spirit of the rich vintage. At this moment the heavy booming of a cannon shook the windows, and brought father and daughter to their feet.

"It is a gun from the Castle," said Erving, hurriedly; "some ship has come in from sea. I must away at once; there may be news of moment." So saying, the councillor swallowed the wine at a single gulp, took his hat and cane, and turned to depart. At the outer door he held the latch an instant, bent on Lois a look of affectionate concern, and said slowly and with emphasis, "Hearken, my child. I know not what this signal may import to thee and me; but sooner than see thee wed with one who forsakes his liege sovereign in the hour of peril I would lose my head!"

"And I, sir, will never wed without your consent."

"Spoken like my own Lois!" said Erving, kissing her. "Heaven preserve thee from all unhappiness, my dear!" With this benediction, which was none the less heartfelt because haste somewhat marred its solemnity, the councillor left the house.

Lois listened until her father's footsteps could no longer be heard. She then went to the escritoire, unlocked it, and taking a sheet of paper on which she wrote a few words, folded and sealed it with her own device.

That evening, as Nelson was mounting the steps of his lodgings, he was accosted by a negro, who, after convincing himself by the light of a lantern that it was really the object of

his search, thrust a perfumed billet into the young man's hand. He then disappeared around an angle of the wall. Nelson entered the house and broke the seal.

The missive enclosed only these words, traced in a delicate hand,

"Come to me. L. E."

Reflecting that every woman's letter ought to contain a postscript, Nelson looked again, and read at the bottom of the page, "Fail not on your allegiance; much, very much, depends upon it." There were eleven words in the postscript, and three in the letter itself.

Nelson glanced at his feet, his hands, and his hair, with a solicitude quite pardonable in a young man so deeply in love. He appeared satisfied with the scrutiny, and after settling his neckcloth of fine linen, and adjusting the lace ruffles at his wrists, was in five minutes on his way to his mistress.

Lois was seated in an embrasure of the window, her hands idly crossed over a delicate piece of embroidery in her lap, when a familiar figure emerged from the darkness of the street. She heard the gate swing back with a sharp click to its place, a quick foot-fall on the gravel-walk to which her heart kept time, and two strokes of the brazen knocker, at each of which that sensitive little organ gave a leap as if striving to break forth from its prison at the summons of its master.

"It is his knock!" she said, softly. An instant after, Nelson was in the room. We pardon the evident admiration with which he gazed upon his mistress. She had taken unusual pains with her toilet, and seemed the impersonation of a goddess receiving the homage of an enraptured mortal. Her large blue eyes sparkled with pleasure; *her captivating mouth*, parting in a *radiant smile that lighted* her expressive features, unmasked a crescent battery of white teeth. A fountain of fair hair fell in natural ringlets upon her forehead and bare neck, where one stray tress reposed, like a serpent in Eden. A bodice of blue silk, tightly laced, disclosed a slight but elegant shape; while short sleeves of fine Cambray linen exposed the arms below the elbow. Her presence seemed to shed a fragrance throughout the room as she stood there, with the warm glow of the fire-light playing about her feet, and the glimmer from a pair of gilded sconces caressing her golden head. Nelson looked as if he would have knelt and kissed the hem of her soft gray robe, but Lois extended a white hand, and he kissed that instead.

Lois led her visitor to a couch, and, having made him sit beside her, released her hand from a pressure which was sufficiently ardent to send the warm blood into her cheeks. She dropped her eyes, and strove to recall certain expressions diligently studied beforehand, but which now seemed to escape in the sweet confusion of ideas caused by her lover's contact. On his part, Nelson seemed in no haste to interrupt the silence, and, after the mutual interchange of a few civil speeches, respectfully awaited the pleasure of his mistress.

"She is indeed beautiful!" he thought.

"How shall I ever tell him?" reflected Lois.

Such interviews always begin with commonplaces. We take the longest path, because we fear to arrive too quickly at the point where our illusions may vanish forever; we linger among them, as if by so doing we might make them realities. Lois felt that the crisis of her fate was come, and confidence oozed away in proportion as she realized the peril that threatened her hopes. Twenty times the momentous question

trembled upon her lips, but she as often hesitated to utter it. Nelson remarked this increasing agitation, and earnestly besought her to reveal its cause.

But, like a true daughter of Eve, the girl sought to approach the subject nearest her heart by degrees, rather than hazard too abruptly a disastrous explication.

"I do not see your father. Is he well, and may I salute him?" said Nelson, at last.

"He is always from home now; and I am left sole guardian of Castle Tremont. Poor, dear man! he is well in body, but in sore distress of mind at the unhappy state of public affairs. How I wish that these quarrels, in which we poor colonists have no part, save to exchange one master for another, might cease!"

"Amen!" said Nelson, earnestly. Much to Lois's disappointment, he did not pursue the subject; but, thinking to distract her thoughts, begged her to favor him with some music.

Lois seated herself at the virginal, and touched the keys with a practised hand. The simple melodies she played harmonized with her mood, and soothed her spirit of unrest. "Think you I have improved?" she asked, rising from the instrument.

"Marvellously!" exclaimed Nelson, with unfeigned delight.

"I owe it to my teacher, Captain George, more than to any skill of my own. With what patience he has trained these wayward fingers, and helped them to master each difficult passage!"

"And doubtless interlards his lessons with a thousand compliments!" said Nelson, with just a touch of irony in his voice.

"He is jealous," thought Lois; then added aloud—"*My father* esteems him *a very gallant man. Only* yesterday he offered us the protection of his cabin, should necessity compel us to leave our home."

Nelson repeated her last words with manifest astonishment. "And what danger threatens my Lois so nearly that she speaks of taking refuge on board the king's ship?"

"'Tis my father's nightmare that some dreadful storm of strife and bloodshed is brooding over us. Dear old man!" she continued, with emotion, "his chief concern is for poor me; but I would not leave him, though within the hour he implored, nay, commanded me to do so."

"Reassure yourself. Your father takes counsel only of his fears. Think you Nelson would stand idle if danger menaced this house?"

"Nay, not so; but"—and here Lois hesitated—"my father says men resolve what part to act; and that they who love their prince must now rally around Sir Edmund." Will he speak now? thought she.

She is sounding me, thought Nelson, who, however, did not fall into the snare his mistress spread for him. Lois's growing impatience dictated her next attempt to compel her lover to declare himself.

"Nelson, you use me like a child!"

"Lois!" said her lover, in a tone of soft reproach.

"Yes; you speak with coldness of what distresses and disturbs my father and me; or, rather, you do not speak at all. Yet the danger is real, notwithstanding your affected indifference, sir. You do not answer like the dear friend I have thought you; you play with me. Is this like yourself? Oh that I were a man!" she continued, clinching her little hands; "I would proclaim my sentiments from the housetops!"

Nelson bent his head as if to allow the storm to pass over, but really to

conceal his agitation. It had come; but how would it end? "Hear me, Lois," said the young man. "I am of no party or faction. I neither deliberate with the one, nor conspire with the other. Sir Edmund has wronged me; and whom he wrongs he loves not. My neighbors distrust me, because I neither join their counsels nor seek to know their plans. Besides, 'tis in Old England the issue must be decided; we of New England are mere lookers-on, as you, Lois, have said but now. Dear one, I am too proud to pay court except to thee."

"But at least say you will not cast your fortunes with the rabble?"

"Whom call you the rabble, Lois?"

"All who maintain the cause of William of Orange."

"Then must I too undergo your censure," said Nelson, firmly, a melancholy smile passing over his face.

"You, Nelson? you?" ejaculated Lois, suddenly facing him.

"Yes, I. Is not my lot irrevocably cast with this unhappy people? Have I not seen them oppressed without appeal, plundered without mercy, and punished without justice? The people are human, Lois; and Englishmen and the descendants of Englishmen will never brook such slavery."

At last Nelson had spoken, and Lois contemplated in silent dismay the discovery she had made. To her the revelation was overwhelming. It lifted the cloud of doubt only to disclose a sea without a pilot, a shore without a haven. It was then the woman spoke.

"Nelson," she said, with heightened color and moist eyes, "you have told me fifty times that you loved me; nay, more, you have made me believe so."

"Let me repeat it a hundred times more, if the sweet confession displease you not."

"*Nay, you must never say so again.*"

"Not declare my love for you! what should stay me?"

"My father's will. Only to-day he said I should never wed with a—"

"Speak out, Lois; do not choose your words."

"With a rebel," continued she, reddening to the roots of her hair; "for such he deems all who follow the fortunes of the Prince of Orange. He loves, yet doubts you. It was for this I bade you come to me; for this—" Lois did not finish the sentence. She covered her face with her hands, and the tears trickled through the white fingers.

Nelson arose from his seat as if moved by a spring of steel, and paced the floor with a hasty step. At length he turned, and, looking upon Lois with unspeakable tenderness, ejaculated in a trembling voice,

"And you, Lois, whom he has promised me; you whom I love so devotedly; you who alone can bring happiness to the life of John Nelson!"

"I cannot disobey my father; it would kill him."

"Is this your final answer, Lois? Think of the past, and what it has been to us both; of our chance meeting, our ripening friendship, our stolen interviews under yonder church-yard elms; our mutual vows of eternal constancy. Am I less to you because I cannot see unmoved the wrongs of my countrymen, or turn a deaf ear to their cry for help? What are parties or factions to you and me? You are enthroned above all human strife in my heart; let your own answer me."

The young man had spoken vehemently, but there was no trace of anger in his voice. He stood there pale and deeply moved, but with the bearing of a frank and loyal gentleman confronted with the serious crisis of his life.

Lois dared not look at him. She raised her head, averted it, sighed, and gave way to a fresh access of grief. Nelson remained standing, immovable, silent, but deeply attentive to her slightest movement. After a silence of two or three minutes, but which seemed to Lois and Nelson to have lasted hours, the young girl let her arms fall with a gesture of utter despondency. Nelson saw that her cheeks were wet with tears.

"Listen," said Lois, vainly trying to render her voice steady. "I have questioned my heart, and it tells me that I still love you. Would it were not so, since we must see each other no more. But I have promised, and that promise I cannot, dare not break."

A voice not at all like Nelson's answered, "Be it so. We part, then, and forever. Lois, farewell."

"No, no; not thus, Nelson, for Heaven's sake! Do not leave me in anger! Cannot we be friends? I must not break my father's heart. Have compassion on my wretchedness, and leave me your esteem! You are too good, too noble, too generous, to deny me one small boon!"

This appeal, which so eloquently proclaimed the struggle between filial duty and overmastering love, touched Nelson to the quick. He covered the hand stretched toward him with kisses, and Lois felt a warm drop fall upon her arm. Obeying the impulse of a pure yet absorbing passion, she threw herself into her lover's arms, held him for a moment, and then sunk almost fainting upon the sofa. Nelson immediately quitted the house. He had scarcely turned into the street, when he met two men muffled in their cloaks.

"There goes a young man who has the ring of true metal, but knows not his own mind," *said the councillor, for he was the speaker.*

"'Tis Master Nelson, then. Pish! he is of too careless a temper to attend to serious affairs," said the other.

"I am not altogether of your opinion," returned the councillor, opening his gate.

CHAPTER VI.

THE 18TH APRIL, 1689.

"When drums beat, laws are silent."

EARLY on the morning of the 18th of April, 1689, symptoms of unusual agitation began to be visible in the North End. News of the attempted arrests had spread like wildfire throughout the length and breadth of the town; but in this excitable quarter it would appear that the entire population was in the streets discussing the latest outrage of their oppressors.

It was a strange sight to see the little knots grouped at the street corners or collected near the public-houses, gesticulating, arguing, explaining more or less vehemently, and with all the exaggeration, accumulated in its passage through a thousand mouths, Sir Edmund's unsuccessful endeavor to kidnap the three foremost men of the colony. These groups, though chiefly composed of men, showed a fair sprinkling of the gentler sex, who seemed even more violent than the male portion of the assemblage, if one might judge by their flushed faces, the high key in which their voices were pitched, and the peculiar earnestness of their manner. Others of the good-wives of the North End, ceding to overpowering curiosity, half hung or leaned over their casements, and overwhelmed the passers-by with questions. Such was the situation of affairs at half-past seven o'clock.

Toward eight o'clock the excitement received an accession and an aspect en-

tirely unexpected. Word passed from group to group that the captain of his majesty's frigate, at the moment of landing from his ship, had been seized by a party of shipwrights, who had conceived the idea of paying Sir Edmund in his own coin, and who almost immediately appeared on the scene with their prisoner. A loud hurrah greeted the captors, and a volley of abuse the captain.

The Honorable Captain George was bareheaded, his ruffles were in rags, and his sword gone. His laced hat, knocked off in the struggle with his captors, was stuck on the greasy poll of a brawny calker, while the leader of the gang bore his sword as one carries a candlestick, at arm's-length, in triumph before.

Captain George was beside himself with rage and vexation; but there was no help for it, so he wisely held his tongue, though he gnawed his lips until the blood came. What else should he do, when his captors had promised to knock him in the head, and with his own sword too, if he did not keep silence?

Now, as the magnet attracts scattered atoms, the prisoner attracted the separate groups, consolidating them into a mass whose momentum was irresistible.

"To the Red Lion with him!" yelled the mob: and as in such conjunctures nothing but a suggestion is needed, the crowd precipitated itself toward the tavern, carrying the little central group along with it. It was with no little exertion of muscle, seconded by oaths liberally dispensed, that the captors attained the tavern door, which they immediately shut behind them.

The inside of the Red Lion swarmed with men, and these men were in the act of being transformed from peaceful citizens into soldiers, armed to the teeth. Those already equipped were lacing on the armor, furbishing the weapons, or filling the bandoleers of their comrades; and as every one worked with a will, the number of steel caps and buff coats increased every instant.

The prisoner could not fail of being interested in the scene, spite of his mental and bodily anguish. The long table usually occupying the centre of the tap-room had been pushed back against the wall. The trap-door, already known to the reader, was wide open; and from some unseen source below a constant stream of pikes, halberds, swords, and muskets flowed upward into hands stretched to grasp them. Already the bar and the table were piled with them, the corners choked with them, and still the supply seemed inexhaustible. On the side opposite the entrance the innkeeper was busy drawing from the spigot of an iron-hooped puncheon, measure after measure of something that flowed without noise, gave out no odor, which nobody tasted, but which everybody seemed eager to obtain.

Captain George took in all this at a glance of the eye. He had in some degree regained his self-possession; and as everybody else suspended for the moment what he might be doing to look at him, the prisoner returned the glances with a haughty and prolonged stare. They should not look him down, at all events. Moreover, the captain, though a coxcomb in a saloon, was a lion on his own quarter-deck. He determined to give this rabble soldiery a taste of his quality, and to recover by a bold stroke his lost prestige. Turning to the innkeeper, he exclaimed,

"Halloo, there, Master Landlord! a measure of that you are drawing."

The grinning landlord brought the

measure. Captain George threw a defiant look around the circle of spectators, and, lifting the tankard high above his head, cried out in a loud voice,

"Health to King James, God bless him! and confusion to his enemies, d—n them!"

With that he carried the tankard to his mouth, but on the instant dashed it violently to the floor with a grimace of astonishment and disgust.

"Curse you!" sputtered the captain, shaking his clinched fist at Vyal; "you have given me gunpowder to drink!"

A roar of derisive laughter that threatened to lift the Red Lion from its foundations drowned his voice. After it had subsided, Colonel Tyng turned to the mortified sailor and said, laconically,

"Your sword, sir."

"Demand it of those who robbed me of it," was the curt reply.

Tyng made no answer; but having given the prisoner in charge of two of his men, whispered in Alden's ear,

"Well; have you found him?"

"Who?"

"Our leader."

"Not I."

An exclamation in the street put an end to the colloquy. A second and a third shout culminated in a prolonged cheer, comparable only with the roaring of the wind which precedes a tempest. The inmates of the tavern pricked up their ears.

"There goes the jack over the fort!"

"There flies its fellow at the frigate's truck!"

"And there is the signal from the beacon! To arms! to arms!"

It was the last announcement which had wrought the populace to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. How they shouted, *and tossed their hats in the air! How those staid Puritans* wrung each other's hands and clapped each other on the back! How the women, sweethearts and wives, flung themselves into each other's arms and wept; and how the aged people joined their trembling hands and raised their streaming eyes to Heaven! Hosanna! The day of deliverance was come!

The bell at the head of the square began to toll. At this signal, those within the tavern burst into the street, cheering, shouting, and brandishing their weapons. In every direction men were seen running like mad toward the rendezvous. Carters left their beasts standing in the streets; housewrights leaped from their scaffolds; masters, apprentices, slaves even, flung away their tools, abandoned their tasks, and hurried to the designated alarm-posts. The delirium was universal, contagious, and growing with every moment. As the inmates of two thousand houses rushed pell-mell into the streets, one would have believed the last trump had sounded.

While these scenes were enacting, the leaders were not idle. The colors and drums of the yeoman regiment were forcibly taken from the custody of the adjutant, to whom, as one of his own creatures, Sir Edmund had confided them. Two or three companies were mustering under the direction of their officers; the distribution of arms continued; while young women, with their aprons filled with orange-ribbons, passed along the ranks, dealing them out to the men, who fixed them in their hats. In ten minutes after the tocsin sounded, five hundred men stood under arms beside their colors.

It was now nine o'clock, and the revolution fully inaugurated. A long consultation took place between such of the old magistrates as were on the ground and the officers of the regiment. This ended, the group separated.

Tyng unsheathed his sword, and, turning to his subordinates, gave each his instructions. Molyneux was ordered to march straight for the jail and liberate all the political prisoners. Alden was to seize the North Battery, and place a sufficient guard there. This done, both were to rejoin their commander at the Town-house. While the two officers hastened to execute these orders, the main body moved off at a brisk pace in the direction of the Town-house; but rapid as was the march, they found the market-place choked up with a surging mass of humanity, and the Town-house in peaceable possession of the Honorable Artillery Company, with Captain John Nelson at its head.

Sir Edmund had only just heard of the failure of his plan, when he also learned that the town was in revolt. He therefore hastened to the Council-chamber, where he found Randolph and a handful of the faithful already assembled.

"So, sirs!" exclaimed the wrathful knight, "the town, it would seem, is in the hands of a rioting mob!"

Even as he spoke, the pealing of the tocsin, the rattle of drums, and the huzzas of the populace, faintly heard at first, swelling louder and louder as their waves rolled onward, taken up and repeated from every point of the compass, penetrated into the chamber. There was a moment's silence, during which each listener was busy with his own thoughts. This awful voice of the people seemed, like heaven's thunder, to command silence.

"Not so, your excellency," observed Randolph, coldly; "it is a revolution."

The knight's face grew pale, his lips were tightly compressed, and his features took on a pinched and haggard look. But this prostration did *not last. Drawing a long* and deep breath, he stamped his foot with a violence which sent the hot blood back into his cheeks, and unsealed his lips as if his foot had come in contact with a secret spring.

"Since they will have it so," he cried, "by God's help they shall know with whom they have to deal! But we can make no good defence here. Let us mount and ride to the fort, and then we shall see. Come! gentlemen, come!"

As Sir Edmund ceased, the shouting seemed to come nearer; while here and there a shot, fired with no other purpose, it would seem, than to add to the uproar, resounded on the air. The knight paused a moment on the balcony, shook his clinched fist in the direction of the tumult, and hissed out between his teeth, "Ay, roar! bellow yourselves hoarse! but you shall find that I can bite! You have slipped your muzzles for the nonce, double brutes that ye are! but, by the God that made me, ere nightfall ye shall hunt your holes like singed rats! To horse, sirs! to horse!" And with a voice like a clarion, a firm tread, and undaunted front, the last representative of the Stuarts descended the steps of the Town-house.

Sir Edmund's troop dashed down King Street at a gallop, turned into Mackerel Lane, and traversed the battery-march like the wind. They found the drawbridge of the fort up, the portcullis down, the sentinels on the ramparts. Captain Trefry, who had seen the cavalcade spur up the hill, ordered the drawbridge lowered. The governor and his followers rode into the fortress, where they were received with a flourish of trumpets, a roll of drums, and by the garrison standing to its arms. Sir Edmund threw a rapid and critical glance around him. Here all was silence, coolness, and discipline.

The gunners calmly blew their port-fires, the magazine was open, and the sergeants were busily distributing ammunition among the soldiers. A grim smile lighted Sir Edmund's face as he noted these significant preparations.

"Ah! good-day, captain! Good-day, gentlemen all!" exclaimed he, when he had dismounted. "They tell me the town is in arms; but, with your good help, I trust we shall bring his majesty's rebellious subjects to terms, and that with speed. How say you, Trefry: think you they will attempt the fort?"

The captain shook his head incredulously. "They durst not: the rabble will spend its rage in running about the town, and its valor in seizing the friends of government."

"Is the frigate warned?"

"Look!"

Sir Edmund looked toward the harbor. The vessel was gayly decked with flags, her ports were open, her guns run out, and her crew at quarters. He could distinguish a group of officers on the quarter-deck whose glasses were levelled at the fort. Turning toward the town, he descried the movement of armed bodies through the streets, and the crowd already collected at the Town-house.

"Up with the royal standard, sir! Show these knaves that we are stirring!"

As the gorgeous folds of the ensign blew out on the clear morning air, the deafening roar of a cannon rolled over town and harbor. Before the smoke lifted, a flash, a report which made the vessel tremble from truck to keelson, burst from the frigate's side. Hardly had its thunder died away, when a puff was seen to issue from the walls of the Castle, and a heavy boom, like the distant echo of the *citadel's gun, reverberated among the green islands* of the bay. A deafening shout burst from the garrison. The frigate's crew sprang to the rigging, and cheered as only sailors can cheer; while faintly across the league of sparkling water came the Castle's answering huzza. When these martial sounds had ceased, and only the screaming of affrighted sea-gulls could be heard, a horseman was seen urging his steed up the hill toward the fortress.

It was now eleven o'clock. All the measures of the leaders had succeeded. The government was in their hands. The venerable Bradstreet, who had been forced to seek a temporary retreat, came forth, and was escorted in triumph to the Council-chamber, where he was now closeted with a deputation of influential citizens of the town. In the midst of mutual congratulations, the firing from the fort and frigate reminded the Bostonians of the work that still remained to do.

The governor raised his hand to secure silence, and then, in a voice tremulous with age and emotion, addressed his hearers.

"Friends," said he, "Heaven has thus far blessed your efforts, praised be His name who has vouchsafed this signal triumph to His people, and that, too, without bloodshed! Once more we stand within the halls of our ancient sovereignty. Once more Jehovah hath delivered his children safe and sound from the snares of the oppressor. Our fetters have fallen, we are free men. Thanks be to God!" continued the aged governor, reverently uncovering, "who hath snatched the brand from the burning, who hath guided His people through great tribulation to this joyful hour."

The governor bowed his head in the midst of a subdued "Amen!" from the by-standers.

"But, friends," resumed he, his feat-

ures hardening as he spoke, "there is still work to do. Until the fort and the frigate are ours, we are not masters of the town. How say you, sirs, shall Sir Edmund Andros be presently summoned to render the fort, and that without delay?"

A tremendous "Ay!" burst from the crowd as from one throat.

The summons was then drawn up. It ran as follows:

"At the Town-house in Boston, April 18th, 1689.

"Sir,—Ourselves and many others, the inhabitants of this town and places adjacent, are necessitated to acquaint your excellency that, for the quieting and securing the people from the imminent danger they in many ways lie open and exposed to, and tendering your own safety, we judge it necessary that you forthwith deliver up the government and fortifications, to be preserved and disposed according to order and direction of the crown of England, which suddenly is expected to arrive, promising all security from violence to yourself, or any of your gentlemen or soldiers, in person and estate; otherwise we are assured they will endeavor the taking of the fortifications by storm."

After the draught had been read, corrected, and approved, the governor took a pen and signed. Each of the fifteen chiefs of the revolution then came forward and wrote his name under that of the governor, the last to sign being John Nelson.

This was the first public act of the revolutionists. If they made a mistake, if events in England did not justify them, if the issue here at home went against them, each of the fifteen knew that he signed his own death-warrant. Thus, even in that chamber, whose successor is threatened with near demolition, first arose the cry, "A free State for New England!" The idea of independent sovereignty already began to stir within the womb *of the future commonwealth, though it was destined not to be born* until half a century later. But timid councils prevailed. The idea was too bold, too startling, perhaps too grand, for the epoch. Stoughton, the future governor, would not sign unless subjection to the throne, which had at first no place in this important state paper, was inserted in set terms. The summons was then despatched to the fort by the hands of a trumpeter.

"For the frigate," resumed the governor, "the captain shall be our hostage. Is that your advice, gentlemen?"

"May we not demand an order to his lieutenant to forbear any hostile act against the town?" suggested Nelson.

"'Tis well thought of," said Bradstreet, approvingly. "Bring him before us."

In a few minutes Captain George entered the chamber, guarded by an officer with a drawn sword. When informed what was required of him, he shook his head in emphatic negative.

The governor, without appearing to notice the gesture, but without taking his eyes from the prisoner, remarked,

"You hear, sir, the will of the people. Answer!"

"A prisoner, sir, may not give orders," said the captain, haughtily.

"Prisoner or no prisoner, it were wise to do as you are bid."

The captain disdained to make any other reply than a contemptuous shrug.

"You refuse?"

"I refuse!"

"Absolutely?"

Captain George turned on his heel. "Lead me to prison," he said, with the air of a man whose decision is finally made.

"Tarry a little!" said the governor, with his mild accent of authority. "Perhaps you dream of a rescue. If so, do not deceive yourself."

The captain smiled. "My lieutenant," said he, "has three hundred men, twenty cannons, and a full magazine. In an hour the town will be in flames; in two, it will be in ashes."

"What, sir! the town, filled with helpless women and children! will your subordinate dare massacre these poor innocents?"

"God's death, sirs!" ejaculated the captain, "were I on my own deck, you should have your answer from the muzzles of my guns!"

"But you are not there," said the governor, in the same unimpassioned tone he had adopted from the first. "I repeat, sir, you are not there. And now, mark me well," continued he, raising his index finger threateningly, and speaking with the deliberation, the solemnity of a judge pronouncing sentence, "At the first shot from your ship, you die; and may God have mercy on your soul!"

Notwithstanding his self-command, the prisoner started and changed color.

"Now," persevered the governor, who observed that he made an impression, "you know my decision. Officer, remove the prisoner. Guard him well; and if he attempts to escape, pass your sword through his body."

The officer laid his hand on the obstinate sailor's shoulder.

"Hold, sir! I will do your bidding," stammered the captain, wiping the sweat from his forehead. He glanced around the chamber, but his eye everywhere encountered only menacing looks.

"Write, then, as I shall dictate," resumed the governor, pointing to pen and ink on the table.

"These are to acquaint you that the first hostile act which may proceed from the ship you command will be the signal for my death. I am convinced *they who have me* in their power *will be as good as their word.*"

The captain signed, folded the document, and wrote the superscription.

"And now, Sir Captain," said the governor, dismissing him by a gesture, "it were fitting you devoted some time to serious meditation."

The prisoner went out of the room shaking with rage and mortification. For him it had been a day of humiliation; but his present mood hardly justified the belief that he meant to make it also one of prayer, as the governor advised.

The prisoner, in going down the stairs, met a man at the foot coming up, about whom the throng jostled and pushed with such eager curiosity that he with difficulty made his way to the first steps, where he turned, smiling, nodding, and waving his hands in good-humored recognition of the warmth of the greeting. Apparently he was far from insensible to the manifold evidences of popularity the crowd seemed so eager to lavish upon him, for his face flushed with pleasure, and he was still young. He stood a moment with his hand on the rail of the staircase, inwardly comparing the crowd with a bear, whose hug, however affectionate it may be in the intention, is none the less mortal to him who sustains it. Having regained his breath, he continued to ascend; but as each step brought him more and more into view of the immense concourse, the hubbub, the clapping of hands, the familiar greetings with which the populace loves to welcome its idol increased in proportion as he mounted higher. By the time he reached the upper landing the uproar became indescribable—so violent, indeed, that it brought the governor and his confederates quickly to the spot.

The full-flowing wig, immaculate bands, and mulberry-colored garments bespoke the new-comer's clerical pro

fession; rather more so, indeed, than the merry twinkle of the eye, the somewhat sensual fulness of the lips, and the well-fed body, denoted abstention from the cravings of the flesh. But however little he may have inherited their austerity of manners, he was nevertheless a theologian of the old Puritan stamp —that is to say, inflexible in matters of faith, uncompromising on doctrinal points, and a firm believer in sorcery, enchantment, and all other crafts of the arch-enemy of mankind. Like them, he neither knew nor wished to know the meaning of religious toleration, and experienced for episcopacy a rabid antipathy little short of that legitimate, that envenomed hatred which the Protestant clergy of his day felt for Catholicism—for its bloody traditions in the past, its sinister development in the present, its more dreaded aggrandizement in the future.

Though not yet thirty years old, Cotton Mather was at this time in the zenith of his fame and the prime of intellectual vigor. His name was already known in England, not only as that of a scholar versed in sacred literature, but as a devoted student of natural science—characters bristling with antagonisms in our day, we admit, but which might, we infer, have existed in his in amiable fellowship in one and the same person. No man in New England exercised greater influence in the pulpit, and few out of it could pretend to his learning, his sagacity, or his ascendency over the minds of the people. Some of these traits came, it is true, by inheritance; but the younger Mather was, like the river, greater than its source. Sir Edmund had not overrated his importance in including him in the order of arrest: Cotton Mather was a born leader of men.

"Huzza for Parson Mather! A *speech! a speech!*" were the cries which had presently swelled into a chorus as the governor made his appearance.

"You hear the voice of the people. Speak, reverend sir; deny them not: and may your wisdom fill them with pious zeal for the righteous cause!" said Bradstreet.

Cotton Mather looked down into the sea of upturned faces. He was profoundly moved. Never had he spoken to such a multitude. He felt that the occasion was great, but he also felt, and his chest expanded with pride, that he was not unworthy of it. A moment's enjoyment of this incense of the soul, and he extended both arms as if to invoke a blessing on the vast congregation, which on the instant was hushed in silence. He then began:

"This day, my friends, praised be God! the hand of the oppressor is stricken with palsy, his pride humbled in the dust. And what shall so poor a man as I speak that ye know not already? Have not all men with admiration seen how to crush and break a country so entirely and signally made up of reformed churches, and at length involve it in the miseries of utter extirpation was the aim of the adversary standing at our right hand? And his far-fetched instruments would gravely inform us that it was not for his majesty's interests that we should thrive! Yea, they did brag and boast that they were as arbitrary as the Grand Turk himself. Nay, more, we were every day told by those who sought occasions to impoverish a land already peeled, meted out, and trodden down, that no man was owner of a foot of land in all the colony."

An angry murmur, emphasized by shaking of heads and nods of assent, passed through the crowd.

"The king," continued the clergyman, "did promise that our governor

should be writ unto to forbear the measures he was upon, but every man who is not a stranger in our Israel doth know that our wrongs did rather daily increase than diminish. The rights of Magna Charta, the privilege of Habeas Corpus, were denied; and what laws they made it was as impossible for us to know as dangerous for us to break. Thus our grievances is a Trojan Horse, in the belly of which it is not easy to recount how many vexations have been contained."

"Amen! amen! That's gospel truth!" affirmed those standing on the balcony. "Amen! amen!" echoed the multitude.

"Give it 'em, parson! I'll hold your wig!" shouted a small boy who had climbed to the top of the whipping-post, from which he enjoyed an uninterrupted view of the proceedings; but who had no sooner uttered his ill-considered though well-meant encouragement than he was unceremoniously hauled down from his perch by a constable and soundly cuffed for his presumption.

The crowd loves to laugh, and this episode put it in great good-humor. The parson, on the other hand, did not like ridicule, and began to grow warm.

"But of all our oppressors," he continued, raising his right arm in an attitude of menace, "we were chiefly squeezed by that blasted wretch, Randolph, and a crew of abject persons fetched from New York to be the tools whereby our souls might be enslaved, our liberties strangled and laid in the grave of our ancient charter. But, my friends, oppression will make a wise man mad, and so we have this day risen in arms, and do seize on the authors of our miseries lest we be by them given away unto a foreign power before the orders of His Highness and the English *Parliament can reach unto us.*"

Mather paused, leaned forward over the balcony, and, in a voice which sent every listener's heart into his mouth, cried out,

"Is there a man among you who is afraid to speak with the enemy in the gate?"

One tremendous "No!" burst from the excited populace.

"If there be any such," pursued the now thoroughly aroused clergyman, "let him depart in peace; for now, ye God-fearing, liberty-loving, tyranny-hating Bostonians, now is the day of retribution come. Up standards, sound trumpets, and strike boldly for your liberties, your altars, and your firesides! And may the Lord of Hosts lead you to victory!"

When the applause which followed this harangue had subsided, the courier who had been despatched to the fort slowly made his way through the crowd to the front of the building, where he sat without dismounting from his horse.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LEADER.

His Excellency Simon Bradstreet leaned over the balcony, and perceiving the courier quietly stroking his horse's neck, called out to him:

"Well speeded, Shelton; and what answer makes the knight?"

"I was roundly rated for my presumption, and bade return to those who sent me."

"Well?"

"Tell your masters, sirrah," cried Sir Edmund, "that if they disperse not within the hour I will presently charge them at the head of my trusty Royals here. Begone! or a bullet shall speed your errand."

"Ha! says he so?" answered the

old governor; "then 'tis high time we were beforehand with his excellency."

The soldiers had not lost a word of the brief colloquy. A savage yell of approval followed the governor's declaration. "The fort! the fort! lead us to the fort!" shouted the now infuriated populace.

The governor hurriedly consulted with his advisers. It was clearly become indispensable to nominate a leader. But who?

Bradstreet turned to one of the revolutionary junto. "You, Shrimpton, shall be our general." The person addressed showed considerable alarm at the proffered distinction. He belonged, he protested, to the civil and not to the military arm. "Well, then," continued the governor, "Captain Nicholas Page, we do appoint thee chief of the forces here assembled." But the old Indian fighter declared his wounds forbade his acceptance. The governor began to show signs of impatience. "Colonel Tyng, do thou lead the soldiers," he urged. But this personage replied, "Excuse me, your excellency; I account myself unworthy the command."

Bradstreet turned in despair from one to another of his counsellors, beseeching, commanding them not to falter in this the very crisis of their enterprise; but whether fear, conscious incapacity, or the dread of becoming too shining a mark in the event of defeat restrained them, or ceding to the contagious example, those appealed to successively shook their heads, and remained both deaf and dumb to the governor's entreaty.

It was now two o'clock. The revolution had not only lost its momentum, it had come to a stand-still; and, as is inevitably the case in such conjunctures, *to hesitate is to be lost.* It is not more natural for the tide that has risen to its full height to recede when its impelling force ceases. The moment was so decisive that all felt its danger: so decisive, that if Sir Edmund had only known, what might he not have attempted?

"Would I were twenty years younger!" cried the aged governor, while tears of shame and vexation started in his eyes—"would I were twenty years younger! None should stand between me and the front of battle."

Captain John Nelson watched all these proceedings with the closest attention. Notwithstanding he had at the very first alarm promptly put himself at the head of his company, and without orders from any source whatsoever made himself master of the Council-house; notwithstanding he had affixed his name to the accusing summons, he seemed to be completely forgotten in the subsequent transactions. So far as he knew, not a soul had even pronounced his name; but, on the other hand, he had been the target for more than one suspicious glance while quietly standing at the right of his company. Still, having so openly certified his devotion to their cause, he cared little for looks; and the mistrustful ones, seeing the grave determination in his face, did not care to hazard more serious manifestations.

He had heard the governor's appeal to the trusted, the prominent chiefs of the insurrection with the natural interest of a man who expected to risk his life in behalf of the same cause he and they had espoused. He had listened to the successive refusals with alternate hope, misgiving, or contempt, according as the candidates appeared in his eyes competent or incompetent, worthy or unworthy. And now the honorable roll was exhausted, the revolution had come to a dead-lock, and no

leader was found. What was to be done?

Nelson turned to his men. "Peyton, Saville," he said, "go and relieve the guard at Councillor Erving's; and see you stir not thence without orders from your captain." The two soldiers departed on the instant.

The young captain took one of those sudden resolutions which make or mar the fortunes of men. He ran up the steps of the pillory, took off his helmet, and, raising it on the point of his sword, exclaimed, in a voice like a trumpet, "Long live the Prince of Orange! let all who love him follow me. Forward!" Short as it was, this was the speech of the day.

No hesitation now. With a mighty cheer the soldiers closed up their ranks. The command went along the line, the tramp of two thousand men shook the solid earth, the wheels of the revolution began to move. Nelson hastened to put himself in the van, while governor, councillors, citizens, looked on in speechless amazement.

"What think you of it?" stammered the governor, addressing young Mather; "shall it prosper?"

"Think! your honor, I think that the end justifies the means."

"Ah! Jesuit that you are," murmured Bradstreet in his ear, "'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.' 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'" The governor, the ministers, and the elders then reentered the Council-chamber and prayed for the success of their arms.

At that time the green crest of Fort Hill, now, alas, only a memory and a regret, overlooked the whole surrounding region. The settled portion of the town had not yet reached its lower slopes, and the ground on the north and west was occupied by pastures, gardens, or orchards, among which were scattered a few brown roofs and many copses of barberry, whortleberry, and tangled shrubbery. It follows that the movement of the insurgent forces was visible from the fort as soon as begun, and that the attacking column would have to traverse an opening of considerable extent exposed to the point-blank fire of the garrison.

The young citizen-general made his dispositions with great judgment, coolness, and decision. A strong detachment under Tyng crossed the open ground to the rear of the fortress, and formed out of musket-range. The vanguard, with Nelson at its head, took the foot-path or battery march, skirting the base of the hill, to the water-battery, which was the first point of attack. While these evolutions were performing not a shot was fired on either side. The insurgent leaders knew the importance of that shot, and hesitated to fire it. The officers of the frigate eagerly demanded of each other why the fort did not open fire; the defenders of the citadel wondered at the silence of the frigate. Nelson conjectured that he had little to fear from the king's ship, but he had anticipated a bloody and determined resistance from the fortress. Why did Sir Edmund hesitate?

There was a moment of terrible suspense, which Nelson hastened to cut short. If any of our readers have ever stood on some gentle slope which seemed inviting the beholder to ascend it, and there, passively awaiting a murderous cannonade, have heard their own hearts madly thump against their ribs, they will know what the Bostonians felt while looking into the muzzles of the enemy's guns; they will comprehend the sensations with which they watched the gunners approach their smoking matches to the touchholes; and they

will not fail to recognize the appalling silence in which the flapping of the citadel's standard was distinctly heard throughout the whole warlike array.

But this suspense was of short duration. Nelson's quick eye fell upon a group standing on the scarp outside the fortress, in which he recognized Sir Edmund's tall figure; and he instantly divined that something was in agitation. He at once gave the signal to advance, when the main body rushed like a torrent upon the battery and were masters of it in a moment. The defenders fled up the hill to the fort, entering it by a postern, pell-mell with the group of which we were speaking. Besides the work, the conquerors captured a barge loaded with ammunition, before it could push off from the battery quay.

This success was, for the insurrectionary forces, what the spur is to the mettled courser. Every man had become a hero in his own eyes, and no longer felt any doubt of his ability to perform prodigies of valor. The capture was of such importance to besiegers and besieged as to produce corresponding depression in the garrison, and, above all, respect for the courage of the assailants. Nelson was the first to enter the battery, sword in hand; but he had been followed closely by his men, who thus demonstrated the complete confidence they felt in their leader. This feat of arms had, then, completely re-established the *morale* of the citizen soldiery. The besiegers had a breathing moment; the besieged had no longer an avenue of escape open to them. But Nelson knew this incident was only the prologue of the tragedy.

Among the number of those who had profited by the general jail delivery were a body of corsairs, who were set at liberty with the significant intimation that an opportunity was now offered to escape the halter by cutting the throats of their late judges—an offer they with enthusiasm embraced. A portion of these desperadoes were now ordered to train the heavy guns of the battery upon the fortress; another squad was soon employed in tearing down an unoccupied warehouse, with what object will soon appear. In five minutes nothing but the skeleton of the building was left standing. Nelson then arranged his plan of attack.

Two companies of musketeers, under Alden, were directed to assault the northern angle; two, under Molyneux, the southern; while an equal force, led by Nelson himself, should attack the main gate. Each detachment was furnished with a squad of corsairs, stripped half-naked, and every man carrying a plank on his head, his back, or his shoulder. They were ordered to rush forward at the signal and bridge the moat. Nelson's column was also further re-enforced with a sturdy band of shipwrights, armed with sledges, beetles, and broadaxes. Turning to the leader, a hairy-breasted giant, who stood leaning on his ponderous hammer, Nelson pointed to the gate and said,

"By God's help I mean to go through yonder gate. How say you, my lad, are you ready to strike boldly for the honor of the North End?"

The giant spat on his hands, tossed his hammer in the air as if it were a plaything, and adroitly catching it by the handle as it fell, briskly rejoined, "All right, captain. You shall go in there. Sam Green, the calker, tells you so."

Nelson cast his eye along the hill-slope. The six companies were in position, and nothing delayed them but the signal. Now or never was the time to vindicate their cause by brave

deeds. "Sound trumpets!" he cried. "Again! again! Up, musketeers! Charge home, and the fort is ours!"

The signal was no sooner given when the whole attacking force rushed up the glacis. Heads lowered, teeth clinched, eyes half shut, every man instinctively clutching his weapon. The separate detachments eagerly sought to outstrip each other in the race for the moat—running, as men run the gauntlet, for dear life. There was no time for reflection, each individual felt that to attain the goal was for him the sum total of existence, or, rather, it seemed the prime object for which he had existed up to that hour. No one dreamed that the forbearance of the garrison would be carried beyond the moment when the trumpets sounded the onset. Up to that moment Sir Edmund might have wished to spare the effusion of blood, but—afterward! It was a folly no one expected of the man. Great, therefore, was the astonishment of the besiegers on arriving at the ditch without having encountered the smallest opposition. It was, in fact, strange, it was more than strange.

Emboldened by this unhoped-for apathy, but doubting whether Sir Edmund might not be preparing some snare, Nelson waved his men on. "Ten Johannes to the first man in the fort!"

Like panthers, the pirates dashed up to the muzzles of the guns, flung their planks across the moat, and, taking their cutlasses between their teeth, began to mount the walls over each other's shoulders. As these were not more than twelve feet high and built of timber, their example was quickly followed by the soldiers who thrust their half-pikes in the interstices and clambered up by their aid. A few well-directed blows having broken the chains supporting the drawbridge, it *fell with a crash, and* Nelson's pioneers were soon thundering at the solid oaken gate, which, stanch as it was, already began to give way under the terrific battering that assailed it. Nelson encouraged the workmen with voice and gesture. The fury of the assault redoubled, while a hundred picked men at their leader's back eagerly awaited the fall of the gate for a final rush. But at this juncture something happened which neither leader nor followers had foreseen.

The drums of the fortress beat a chamade; the shattered gate was swung open from within; and Sir Edmund Andros, surrounded by a knot of gentlemen, advanced to meet the besiegers. Beyond this group the royal troops stood with grounded arms and sullen visages, on the parade of the fort.

The knight took two steps toward the insurgents, and in a clear voice demanded,

"Who commands among you?"

Nelson stepped across the threshold, dropped the point of his sword on his boot, and signified that he had that honor.

"I little thought to have seen the nephew of Sir William Temple leading rebellion," observed Sir Edmund, with a deprecating shake of the head. "What seek ye?"

"Unconditional surrender of the fort and all it contains," was the prompt reply.

"Zounds, sir!" exclaimed the knight; "do you know that what you demand is high-treason?"

"If this is all your excellency has to communicate, we waste words," said Nelson, who felt little inclined to be catechised by the governor.

"Your summons, young man, grates harshly upon an ear little accustomed to hear the word surrender pronounced in his presence," resumed the govern-

or, in a less imperious tone. "To honorable enemies honorable terms—above all, when they still have the means of making an obstinate defence and a bloody. Moderate your pretensions, sir, or we break off the parley."

"As your excellency pleases: only the choice is no longer free to make. Look!"

The knight's eye followed Nelson's finger to the ramparts, which were alive with men who began to exhibit impatience at the length of the conference.

"You see, sir," continued Nelson, "the fort is already ours."

The fact was incontestable. The governor, however, dreaded falling into the hands of his new masters too much not to attempt to extricate himself from the dilemma; he therefore said,

"If we render the fort—ourselves and the garrison marching out with our arms—"

"Your excellency, I had the honor to demand the fort and all it contains," interposed Nelson, with significant emphasis on the last words.

"Well, then, we withdraw our demand for the garrison; but for ourselves—the gentlemen of his majesty's government—"

"You shall be conducted before the Committee of Safety, yourself and the officers of the late government."

"The late government! Do you hear that?" whispered Alden in Tyng's ear—"the late government!"

"Suffer us rather to go on board the frigate; we will instantly depart the colony. Say, sir, is it agreed?"

"Sir Edmund," replied Nelson, sheathing his sword and putting an end to the conference, "time presses: yield yourself a prisoner."

"'Tis well, sir," said the knight, with dignity. "Seeing the gentlemen *of the Council are assembled, we will go and meet them.*"

Sir Edmund then unbuckled his sword from his belt and handed it to Nelson, with the remark,

"I shall require it of you, sir, be assured."

"Your swords, gentlemen," demanded Nelson of the knight's retinue.

All except Randolph delivered their weapons; but the ex-secretary, drawing his own from the scabbard, snapped the blade across his knee and flung the pieces on the ground. "Had not the devil, your patron saint, served you better within the fort than without, we should not now stand in this wretched plight!" he muttered between his teeth.

The Bostonians observed the act; they had already recognized their bitterest enemy. A storm of execration saluted the secretary's ear, who listened with exasperating calmness to such outcries as,

"Hang the villain Randolph!"

"Let us wash our hands in his heart's blood!"

"Cut him down! Kill the author of our miseries!"

Randolph stood with folded arms and a countenance perfectly diabolical in the midst of these menaces. If looks could have killed, he would have been transfixed by a hundred mortal glances; but he incurred a more apparent danger, since every one who knows the temper of a mob knows also that the transition from words to blows is logical and legitimate. It needed all Nelson's authority, supported by other of the chiefs, to prevent the populace from tearing the ex-secretary in pieces; and when the prisoner moved off, the guards were often compelled to use force in order to protect him from their fury. No open insult was offered Sir Edmund. Though he walked with dauntless mien in the midst of his guards, not a cry escaped the pop-

ulace; while, on the contrary, the progress of Randolph was strewed with imprecations, reproaches, and threats. And this man, whom twenty hands were always outstretched to curse, who met on all sides nothing but flaming eyes and haggard faces, walked on as if it were a triumphal march, and he its hero receiving the homage of a grateful people.

The royal troops piled their arms, and were marched to their barracks, prisoners. Nelson then ordered the heavy guns trained upon the frigate. When everything was ready the portfire was applied to a gun, but only the priming flashed. Another and another were tried, with the same result. A light dawned on Nelson. "Your powder, captain, is not of the best," said he, turning on Trefry a glance of inquiry.

"I should think not! the magazine has been flooded and water poured in the vents of the guns—in short, every kernel in the fort is spoiled."

"And was this done by your order, sir?" said Nelson, a little sternly.

The captain looked at his questioner with open-mouthed amazement. "My order!" he stuttered, "say rather your order. It was not you, but treason, captured the fort."

"In any case, I have it now."

"Ay," rejoined Trefry, moving off and emitting a profound sigh, "Satan protects his own."

Everything was now explained. Upon finding the ammunition ruined, a request had been sent to the frigate for a supply, but the approach of the insurgents prevented its transportation into the fort. All hope of successful resistance having vanished, Sir Edmund recollected Randolph's advice to go on board the frigate. Without doubt *the advice was excellent, but the resolve to profit by it* came too late. At the very moment of putting it into execution Nelson's vanguard, as we have seen, cut off all escape. No other alternative remaining, it was then determined to treat with the insurgents; but Sir Edmund believed his honor concerned in postponing this disagreeable duty until the very last moment.

Captain Nelson retained for the present command of the fortress. Having obtained a supply of powder, he sent an officer to demand the frigate's sails; and as the demand was coupled with the threat to sink him at his anchors if he did not obey, the commander prudently decided to accede. The next day the keys of the Castle were delivered up, and its garrison replaced by soldiers recruited from the ranks of the revolutionists. Thus every vestige of the government of James II., "by the grace of God defender of the Faith," etc., ceased to exist in the Bay Colony. And thus Nelson the Churchman, Nelson the proscribed, had contributed no little to bring about the result. We trust he has explained himself to the entire satisfaction of our readers.

CHAPTER VIII.

NELSON, ERVING, AND LOIS.

THE revolution being thus fully achieved, the people quietly returned to their accustomed avocations, leaving their leaders to set the political house in order. There seemed at first danger that the country people, who flocked in multitudes to the scene of action, might sully their triumph with some act of cruelty toward the prisoners. They continued to parade the streets, and, to surround the house in which Sir Edmund was confined, so that the reaction which had already begun to make itself felt among the

sober citizens was, from hour to hour, interrupted by the arrival of some fresh band of rustics, who furnished occasion for renewed tumult, and of course renewed alarm. But, happily for the cause they supported, their fury went no farther than noisy threats. Sir Edmund was remanded to the custody of Nelson. The councillors, among whom was Erving, were admitted to bail, and permitted to return to their homes; but Randolph remained in close confinement in Boston jail.

We cannot pause in our narrative to speak of the audacious character of the revolution. We are in the current, and must go where it conducts. There had been an eruption, beneath which the Stuart dynasty was forever buried. Like a dead body plunged into the sea, King James's rule, dragged down by the weight of its own ignominy, continued to send up a few bubbles on its way to everlasting oblivion; but these bubbles broke without causing so much as a ripple on the surface of renovated order.

It must be allowed that Sir Edmund Andros bore himself stoutly up in the midst of his misfortunes. Once he attempted to regain his liberty disguised in female apparel, but was detected at the moment of passing the outer sentinels. Another time he narrowly escaped being assassinated by his guards, from whose fury he was rescued by the timely arrival of Nelson on the spot. His guardian endeavored to soften the irritation of the prisoner by such acts of kindness as were in his power to perform, or such privileges as honorable men may grant an honorable foeman. Feeling neither hatred nor uncharitableness for the fallen knight, the manly, the upright, the courteous side of Nelson's nature enjoined him to *treat Sir Edmund, in his character of prisoner, with ten times* the consideration, the respect he had ever shown for Sir Edmund in the time of his greatness. *Noblesse obligé.* What, therefore, was Nelson's astonishment when, on the third day after the prisoner had been consigned to his keeping, he received an order to deliver the fort to a Jamaica buccaneer, named in the order as its future commandant.

It is not our purpose to pursue the course of public events any farther than they may affect the fortunes of the principal personages of this history. Suffice it to say that, on the 29th of April, news having arrived of the coronation of William and Mary at Whitehall, their majesties were proclaimed at the Town-house in Boston with extraordinary pomp, amidst the plaudits of the people. Sir Edmund, Randolph, and Trefry were, by the king's command, put on board ship for England, there to answer what might be alleged against them. Society, like a river that has overflowed its natural boundaries, once more resumed its ordinary course.

To say that Nelson was deeply hurt by the treatment he experienced would be no more than plain truth, but he was careful not to betray the feeling by any useless display of passion. In composing the new government, his services, his sacrifices, and his talents were not so much as considered. He was an Episcopalian, and was not that enough to stamp him unworthy to sit among the immaculate saints of a different dispensation? Without doubt, such was the decision. They were ready to forget their obligation; pride forbade his reminding them of it. They declared it to be a case of conscience. We leave posterity and our readers to judge whether the Churchman's conscience, which made his country's redemption part and parcel of his religion, or the Puritan conscience, which

put religious hate above all else, was the genuine, the whiter conscience. Nelson's perceptions on the subject were clear: he was not deficient in understanding. He therefore wisely refrained from intruding either himself or his affairs upon the new rulers.

Therefore John Nelson remained plain John Nelson; and having plenty of leisure to reflect, he reflected upon his ebullition of pure patriotism, whose promptings he had obeyed, it is true, without a thought of reward, and whose unique result to himself had been a cavalier dismissal from his command. No; we forget: he had justly incurred the enmity of his own co-religionists, and the loss—the thought was almost death—of his mistress. Like Francis, after the battle of Pavia, he could say, "All is lost except honor."

It must be confessed there was nothing very reassuring in these thoughts, and for the rest, his present situation was extremely difficult and extremely embarrassing; but Nelson was not the man to sit down and be crushed. The ingratitude he experienced wounded only his self-love, and such wounds are seldom mortal. But the loss of his mistress! Ah! there the envenomed shaft not only struck deep, but quivered in the flesh. Still, the young man heroically put forth his hand to pluck it from the wound, though the act might prove fatal in the doing. "It is finished; all is over between Lois and me; I must not, will not think of her," he said, and immediately fell to thinking of her more than ever.

Nelson had exchanged only a look with Lois's father, on that memorable day, at the fort; but that look was enough. In it were concentrated all the old man's scorn, resentment, and despair. It was the look of a judge putting on the *fatal black* cap, and *had dashed the moment* of Nelson's triumph with bitterness. Erving saw Nelson advance at the head of his men with amazement; but when the two met face to face, his stupefaction betrayed itself in a groan that might have extorted pity from a stone.

A brief and formal examination resulted in the worthy councillor's liberation, upon his pledged word to abstain from exercising his late functions, or in any way aiding or abetting the late government. He walked slowly homeward, ruminating on the momentous occurrences of the day; debating within himself how he should break the heavy tidings of Nelson's defection.

The first thing he saw was his own gate guarded by two soldiers. The sight revived his apprehensions, and for the moment, also, his doubts of the good faith of his captors. But as the soldiers permitted him to pass unchallenged, he asked, with a certain awkward hesitation, by whose order they were there.

The soldiers replied that they guarded the house by order of their captain.

"Of what company are you?"

"The Artillery Company."

"Ah!" said the ex-councillor, growing red in the face, "then it is by Captain Nelson's order the inmates of my house are prisoners?"

"Wrong, your honor; we are a safeguard."

"And those within may enter or depart at will?"

"Freely."

"Then, as master here, I relieve you from the duty you are upon."

"Pardon: we can only leave our post by Captain Nelson's order."

The councillor hardly knew whether to be more annoyed or gratified by this mark of attention. Without saying more, he turned to the door, where he was met by Lois, who threw herself, with a glad cry, upon his breast.

"Thank Heaven! father, you are safe home again!" she joyfully exclaimed. Seeing his dejection, his fatigue, she kept back the questions she was dying to ask. "But what do these men want?' she hurriedly questioned.

"Do not fear them; they are friends."

"Then send them away."

"I cannot."

Without removing his hat, the councillor dropped into a chair, and, smiting his thigh two or three times with his open palm, gave way to the utter exhaustion, mental and physical, which mastered him. Lois ran to a sideboard and filled a glass with wine, which her father swallowed with evident benefit to the outward and inward man. "Thank you, my dear," he said, suiting the action to the word; "that puts me on my legs again."

The councillor plunged his hands in his pockets, dropped his eyes upon the painted floor, and thus he stood, balancing himself back and forth, first on his toes, then on his heels. Then he stood still awhile, and then, putting his hands underneath his coat-tails, marched rapidly up and down the room. Finally, he took a huge pinch of snuff, and blowing his nose with a blast like that of a trumpet, found his tongue at last.

"Lois," he asked, purposely averting his gaze, "do you know what has happened?"

"No, indeed, sir. The street has been full of armed men, and I dared not venture out-of-doors. These soldiers came, but I was afraid to question them. Then I heard guns and shouts, which made me tremble, but I could not guess their meaning. What has happened? Something dreadful, I am sure. Tell me; I can bear it."

"*I am going to* tell you; but you *must be calm.* You see that I am cool—cool as a cucumber," said the old man, totally forgetting the excitement he had exhibited only a moment ago. "'Tis a wretched business, but thus it is. Our cause is lost—hopelessly lost. There was no resistance; we were betrayed—shamefully, wickedly betrayed. Town, fortifications, government—everything, in a word—are in rebel hands: Sir Edmund a prisoner, with all his suite."

"Except you, father."

"A prisoner on parole—bound, body and breeches, to the knaves."

"But you are safe," cried Lois, taking the old man's hands in her own. "I have you once more, safe and sound, and that is quite enough for the present. These are indeed evil tidings, but, sad as they are, glad am I that it is all over; for I may now breathe freely."

"Would you like to know," asked Erving, for the first time hazarding a look in Lois's face—"would you like to know who was the rebel leader—he who marshalled their array; who stormed the fort at their head, and to whom Sir Edmund gave up his sword?"

Lois's eyes flashed. "What can the name of such a traitor be to Lois Erving?" she asked.

"True," responded her father, indifferently; "what, indeed? Still, as it is some one you have known, I thought—"

"No matter, father; that is only one reason more why I would remain ignorant, since remembrance could be only a perpetual regret," said the proud-spirited girl. She now spoke excitedly, and with an accent of bitter scorn. "Oh, may the shame he has brought upon others be one day his! May—"

"There, there," interposed Erving, "you know not what you say; and, in

truth, we might have fared much worse than we did, but for this rebel knight-errant."

"Then I am his humble servant"—and here Lois made a ceremonious courtesy—"but never let us mention him again," said she, haughtily.

"Confound it!" muttered Erving, "I cannot blurt it out to her like the town-crier—rumor must do it. She has a shrewd wit, and perhaps already half suspects. Besides," pursued he, "she is no true woman if she does not make a *volte-face*, as Sir Edmund says, and pester me with questions within the hour. Let us wait and see."

A file of soldiers now marched up the street and stopped before the councillor's house. The subaltern left his men at the gate, crossed the garden, and knocked at the door; while Erving and his daughter watched him from behind the curtains of a window. "What now, I wonder?" thought the councillor, as he went to meet the officer, forgetting, in his preoccupation, to shut the door behind him.

"Sir," said the subaltern, politely, "I am here to return this sword to its owner." So saying, he took the weapon in question from under his cloak and handed it to Erving.

"To whom am I indebted for this courtesy?"

"To our captain, to be sure; he who took the fort, and now commands it—the brave Nelson."

A lump rose in the councillor's throat, but he choked it down again. "Bear my thanks to your captain, young gentleman: say I am deeply moved by this kindness, and shall remain his obliged debtor. Ho! Giggles, a glass of wine for the gentleman. Step in, sir; step in, I pray."

The officer politely excused himself, and, having *relieved* the sentinels, *marched off with his men.*

When Erving went back into the drawing-room, he found Lois standing in the middle of the floor, leaning heavily upon a table. Her face had a pinched, her eyes a dazed look, and she was pale as death. Erving comprehended that she had received the blow full in the heart. He gently disengaged her grasp from the table, led her to a seat, and, without speaking, caressed and soothed her tenderly as a mother. Her pallor, a convulsive twitching at the corners of her mouth, told him that the poor girl's overtaxed powers of endurance were about to fail her. She remained perfectly rigid, one would have said in a trance, for a few moments. Then, all at once, Lois drooped, her head fell upon her father's shoulder, and she sobbed out, "Oh, father, I dearly loved him—dearly!"

CHAPTER IX.

ADJUSTMENTS.

In the general settlement that ensued, no one could claim to be wholly content. The people recovered some of their ancient privileges, but neither argument, entreaty, nor importunity could obtain from the king the restitution of all that Charles II. had wrested from them. Their friends wrote that Dutch William meant to be king not only of England, but of her colonies; and as the world knew him to be a very obstinate man, they were advised to take what they could get, and to bide their time. There was nothing more to be said, so they took the half loaf with many wry faces.

The leaders, in overthrowing the government of King James, breathed freely. Assured success brought with it oblivion for the political crime of *lèse-majesté*. Nevertheless they still

ed. A man of strong brain, long arm, and iron will had ascended the throne, in whom they felt the master; a man whom it would be difficult to deceive, impolitic to trifle with, and dangerous to disobey. They were, so to speak, put upon probation until the king should be able fairly to look about him.

The soldiers, who had been withdrawn from the frontier garrisons established by Sir Edmund, finding it impossible to obtain their arrears of pay, ran through the streets shouting, "Long live King William!" "God bless Sir Edmund Andros!" and, "Curse all Pumpkin States!" in one and the same breath. They repeated these cries in front of the Town-house with especial vigor of lungs. Stripped of their defenders, the devoted plantations were ravaged by the enemy at leisure. One by one they were being extinguished in blood.

The magistrates and those in authority having to meet these aggressions with an empty treasury, a disbanded soldiery, and a public spirit leaning a little toward anarchy, were compelled to have recourse to imposts, impressments, and sounding proclamations. Now, as the people had fondly anticipated a political millennium, in which they should enjoy freedom from taxes, from wars, and from domestic violence, the effort to rehabilitate the old government caused no end of grumbling, and was productive of little else. Meanwhile the Indians and their French allies were making a worse than wilderness of the frontier settlements.

Sir Edmund Andros and his immediate followers slipped through the fingers of men whose creed was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. At the same time neither he nor they could silence certain disquieting thoughts upon the reception that awaited them in England. In imagination the Tower loomed threateningly at the end of the voyage.

To descend to minor personages, Captain George refitted his ship, bent his sails, and made ready for sea. He then invited the selectmen of the town to partake of a collation on board the *Rose*, as the invitation read, "in sign of forgetfulness of the past, in token of present reconciliation, and as a pledge of mutual esteem in the future." The nine worthy citizens—that being the cabalistic number constituting the town government—responded to this generous tender of the olive-branch by presenting themselves on board the frigage at the appointed hour, where they were feasted with unstinted good cheer, and drank punch until the memory of all unkindness was drowned in the cup of forgetfulness.

While the love-feast was at its height, one of the guests happening to look out of a port-hole, observed that the land seemed moving backward from his line of vision. If he was not drunk — and his confidence on this point was not great—the frigate was slowly forging down the bay. He communicated the discovery in some alarm to his companions. All rose from the table except the host, who coolly explained that he was unwilling to lose so favorable a breeze; that at most it would be only a little farther for the bargemen to row back; and finished by begging his guests to resume their places.

But as they insisted on taking their leave at once, the captain made no further difficulty, and all repaired on deck, where they found the whole crew assembled as if to do honor to the guests. The citizens wished to express their sense of the courtesy in fitting terms, but before the spokesman could open his mouth, both he and his companions

were, at a signal from the perfidious commander, seized, bound, and each lashed to a gun. So quickly had all this been effected that the prisoners had scarcely time to utter a cry; but when, at a second signal, the boatswain and his mates advanced brandishing a cato'nine-tails, and began to shower blows upon the most prominent and vulnerable part of their persons, howls of rage broke from the unhappy conscript fathers, which were speedily changed into groans, lamentations, and entreaties for mercy.

When the unfortunate and too confiding civilians had been soundly flogged, they were released and tumbled with little ceremony into their boat, amidst the mocking laughter of the whole ship's company.

Furious, smarting with pain and mortification, they rowed straight for the Castle, and with tears in their eyes besought the commandant to sink the frigate to the bottom. But as that officer declared the ship to be already beyond reach of his guns, the victims of this treacherous breach of hospitality sadly made their way back to the town. It was several weeks before they were able to perform their official functions sitting.

On the morning after sailing, Randolph came on deck, and perceiving Trefry abstractedly looking over the taffrail into the sea, walked straight to the spot, and touched his fellow-passenger's shoulder. Hearing the step, and feeling the touch, Trefry looked up.

"Captain Trefry cannot have forgotten," began Randolph, "certain words spoken by him on an occasion not long past."

"Say that I have not forgotten—what then?" was the haughty reply.

"A *gentleman of his* profession is *too well aware, without* needing to be reminded by a civilian like me, that such language demands either an apology or—" said Randolph, finishing the sentence with a significant movement of his hand toward the place where his sword usually hung.

"I understand. On our arrival you will do me the honor to send me your second."

"You will not retract?"

"No!"

"Then the affair must be decided without delay," pursued Randolph, with quiet determination.

"How, sir! we are on board a king's ship, and no land is in sight."

"Oh, sir," rejoined the ex-secretary with freezing politeness, "since we understand each other, a way may be found to settle the affair, and that without leaving the ship."

"Name it."

"This is my proposal. I cannot brook your presence on this ship; it is insupportable. I do not choose to meet you day after day, week after week, with this insult unavenged. Either you or I must leave the frigate's company, and with speed."

"Your proposal?"

"Do you see those platforms?" said Randolph, pointing to the round-tops where the lookouts were usually stationed.

Trefry nodded. Randolph resumed:

"You will take your stand in one, I in another, each of us to be provided with a brace of pistols; and to fire at pleasure after reaching his position."

"Without witnesses?"

"There will be witnesses enough, never fear."

"The main-top is a trifle higher than the others."

"Let chance decide the choice."

Trefry again nodded. Randolph continued: "To-morrow, at daybreak, we ascend the rigging together. Th

sailors will not notice us, or, if they do, will suppose our real purpose to be anything but that we intend. It is understood that as the maintop is the highest, the one to whom it falls is to wait until his adversary takes his place."

Again Trefry signified his assent. "You have regulated the manner and conditions of the combat to perfection," said he. "I did not know you were so accomplished in affairs of this sort," he added, with an imperceptible sneer.

Randolph bent stiffly. "And now, sir, it is for you to accept or refuse."

The captain was rather chary of his words, but he felt that the moment was come to explain himself. "Your proposal is something whimsical; but Arthur Trefry will not balk your humor," was all he said. The two men then separated, without having exchanged an angry word or gesture.

The preliminaries having been thus settled to the mutual satisfaction of the principals, the details of this strange encounter were carried out to the letter. At dawn the antagonists came on deck, and after saluting each other with ceremonious politeness, sat down, like the best of friends, on a gun. Trefry drew a crown from his waistcoat pocket and tossed it in the air. Randolph won the choice of positions. "I choose the main-top," said he. His adversary would thus have the sun in his face.

"What are you doing there, gentlemen?" asked the officer of the deck, stopping before them in his walk.

"Deciding a wager, lieutenant," explained Randolph, with a smile.

"Would it be imprudent to ask the subject?" pursued the officer.

"By no means; Captain Trefry *wagers a dozen of canary* against my *pistols here that he will* bring down yonder sea-gull, from the foretop, at the first fire."

"Forego your purpose, gentlemen; it will bring us bad luck," said the officer, gravely.

"Bah!" rejoined Randolph. "I cannot lose my pistols for such childish superstition."

"As you will, then; only I trust you may miss your aim, Captain Trefry," said the officer, walking forward.

"Amen!" ejaculated Randolph.

"If eye and hand do not fail, I shall disappoint you," muttered the soldier.

"Ready?" said Randolph, inquiringly.

"Ready!"

"You are quite at ease on the subject of witnesses?"

"Quite at ease," echoed Trefry, rising to his feet. The two men then began in a leisurely manner to mount the ladders.

The morning was fine, the sea smooth, and the wind light and baffling. The vessel, bathed in sunshine from truck to water-line, settled down in the trough of the sea, remained a moment stationary, and then forged slowly ahead on the summit of the monstrous billows, which rolled majestically to leeward without breaking. The topsails hung loosely in the brails, so that nothing prevented the antagonists from having a clear view of each other.

Trefry was the first to reach his station; Randolph's foot touched the platform a moment later. The sea-gull sailed slowly above their heads, keeping up with the ship, and occasionally sending forth a wild scream, which seemed like the cry of a human being in distress. As the ship slowly rolled from side to side, the antagonists were compelled to support themselves with one hand while drawing their pistols with the other. Trefry was pale, Randolph livid. Both held their fire until

the instant when the frigate became motionless. The lieutenant and the sailors watched them curiously from the deck. When the stately ship rose upright on the crest of a wave, both levelled their weapons and fired at the same instant. There was but one flash and one report.

"Hold, on your lives!" shouted the officer of the deck, recovering from his momentary stupefaction. Then, turning to the astounded sailors, "Ring the alarm! Aloft there, and seize those madmen! Do you hear, rascals?" shaking his trumpet excitedly at his men. "Away with you!"

The quick strokes of the bell, the shouting, brought the whole ship's company to the deck. Already the active seamen were half-way up the shrouds, when Randolph raised his second pistol, took deliberate aim, and pulled the trigger. But at the very moment when the barrel of the weapon became steady the gull flew shricking between him and his mark, disconcerting his aim. His bullet buried itself in the mast a few inches above Trefry's head.

With a frightful oath Randolph hurled his still smoking pistol at his adversary, and, thrusting his right hand in his breast, glared fiercely across the airy space just traversed by the invisible messenger of death. One hand clutched the rigging like a vise, the nails of the other were buried in the flesh.

It was now Trefry's turn. He also raised his second pistol, took careful aim, and fired as the sailors were clambering into the tops. Randolph stood an instant erect, turned white, let go the rigging, and before the outstretched hands could touch him tottered and pitched headlong into the sea. Trefry was carried below, with a bullet through his shoulder.

As soon as he could put his affairs in order, Royal Erving, late of His Majesty's Council, also took ship for England. The worthy councillor hoped that the voyage might prove beneficial to Lois, whose health, his anxious eyes saw, had visibly declined of late. Absence, that universal but too often ineffectual panacea for diseases of mind and body, was to be tried—absence from old scenes, old memories, old friends; contact with new scenes, new friends, and novel experiences. We do not know how Lois Erving will support the trial—ought we not to say, profit by the cure? but as her father had promised himself to leave nothing undone which might contribute to the restoration of her health, and as she manifested nothing but the most patient resignation, at least in his presence, we will leave her in the hands of this excellent physician, wise counsellor, and true friend.

And so the old house on Tremont Street was shut up, and one lovely morning in September father and daughter stood on the deck of an outward-bound vessel watching the fast receding land, whose breezes still tossed the white spray, filled their sails, and sported with Lois's hair.

"Good-bye, New England!" said the councillor, with a sigh, drawing his daughter's arm through his own and turning away.

"Farewell, my heart!" whispered Lois's pale lips.

CHAPTER X.

NELSON IS SUMMONED BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

It now becomes indispensable to put the reader *au courant* with two military operations of some importance in their day; and we hasten to bespeak the indulgence of those severe critic

who look upon any departure from the strict order of chronology as deserving a place in the criminal code of every truly enlightened community.

There is nothing like a common danger—danger real, imminent—a danger that is felt, and that cannot be put out of sight—for composing public or private quarrels, or at least suppressing them for the time being. The war that existed between the crowns of England and France was blazing fiercely on the frontiers of New England and of New France. Something must be done to check the murderous forays of the enemy, or he might soon be expected before the gates of the capital itself. To this end it was decided to launch such a blow against the near province of Acadia as would, it was judged, recall the savages to the defence of their own villages, free English soil from invasion, and restore confidence in the ability of the new rulers to grapple with the difficulties of their situation. Hostilities were accordingly carried into the dominions of His Christian Majesty by Sir William Phips. Sir William having made a successful descent upon Port Royal, the principal seaport of Acadia, meditated pushing his conquests still farther, and even dreamed of planting the English flag upon the walls of Quebec.

Things inconsequential in themselves often exert a momentous influence upon the fortunes of individuals —one wholly unforeseen, impossible therefore to guard against. They are the weapon which, instead of dealing death in the enemy's ranks, bursts in the hands of him who points it. The garrison of Port Royal were brought to Boston as prisoners, in violation, it was said, of the capitulation accorded by Sir William Phips. The Sieur de *Meneval, who commanded* the place, *having haughtily repulsed* Sir William's offer to lodge in his house, demanded permission to accept the hospitality of his good friend and brave enemy, Nelson. This two-edged affront the knight was incapable of either forgetting or forgiving, for, of all men, Nelson was his aversion and his stumbling-block. Once alone with his host, De Meneval unbosomed himself.

"Do you know, chevalier," he said, "that this Fibs is a robber? *Parbleu!* but for you I should not have a crown or a shirt to bless myself with."

And Nelson had replied, "Your language is rather strong."

"Is it not? Judge, then, when I tell you that he stripped me of everything—my table-service, my linen, and my clothes. But that is not the worst of it: confiding in his honor—*Mon Dieu*, his honor!" repeated the Frenchman, raising his eyes to heaven—"I gave my money into his keeping; and now—"

"Well?"

"*Pardieu!* the miserable refuses to return a livre!"

"Positively?"

"Flatly."

"Reassure yourself, my dear chevalier, Governor Bradstreet is too honorable a man to permit such an outrage to pass unnoticed. Sir William must disgorge. For the present"—pointing to a closet—"there are my clothes, which I hope will fit you; and here"—throwing it upon the table—"is my purse. Use both freely. No thanks, I beg: I detest them."

"I accept your kindness as a trust for the first poor prisoner of your side who has the bad luck to fall into our hands. *Noblesse obligé*," said the French officer, laying his hand on his heart. "But this Fibs," pursued he, returning to the subject of his thoughts by a rather abrupt transition, "it enrages me to think that as prisoner

I cannot challenge him. *Ma foi!*" throwing himself on guard, "with what pleasure I should run the *coquin* through the body!"

"And perhaps perforate your own waistcoat or your own shirt."

"In that case he should be welcome to them."

"Have patience. I am sure your affairs will brighten as soon as I have paid my respects to the governor. Now, had you fallen into my hands instead of Sir William's—"

"How! into your hands?"

"As you might," finished Nelson, "considering that the Council proposed, at one time, to honor me with the command it afterward bestowed on Sir William Phips."

"And why not you, chevalier? if it is not imprudent to ask."

"Oh," said Nelson, laughing quietly, "in the first place, I was a merchant, and they wanted a soldier."

"Pass on to the second reason," said De Meneval, joining in his friend's laugh, which he perceived had nothing in it of bitterness.

"We did not get so far: the first was reason enough."

"But Fibs is no more a soldier than you are; that is, of no more experience in war, eh! what am I saying?" said De Meneval, looking around the walls, where Nelson's uniform, his arms, and his horse-furniture were hanging on pegs.

"No, but he is a sailor, and that is the next thing to it."

"Ah, bah! and afterward?"

"Afterward they offered to make me Phips's lieutenant," said Nelson, becoming serious.

"De Meneval pricked up his ears. "And what did you say to that?" he asked.

"What should I answer?"

"*Pardieu!*"

"The offer was a clumsy enough pretext. If a merchant was unfit to lead, he was equally so to be second in command. Such offers are made to be refused; made to put you, if possible, in the wrong. It results that you became Phips's prisoner instead of mine; and that I am in the wrong."

Seeing Nelson, who began by laughing, had finished by frowning, De Meneval, with instinctive delicacy, forbore to pursue the topic.

"You now comprehend," resumed Nelson, after a lull in the conversation, "how my relations with Sir William prevent my being of much service to you."

"Perfectly. Let us talk no more about it."

"Not so fast, chevalier. The Council did me the honor to ask my advice relative to the expedition. Well, then, I think I may venture to ask something in return, especially if it is not in my own behalf."

"I should beg this favor of you, provided I did not feel sure of its complicating your relations with the Council still more. But now—"

"Give yourself no uneasiness on that score. Either I am deceived, or the Council will grant all I ask, and consider themselves well rid of me in the bargain."

"Was not this Fibs a ship-carpenter?" asked De Meneval.

Nelson replied that he believed he was accounted a good one, and, like those men who boast of their humble origin when it is likely to serve their ambition, Sir William was fond of visiting the ship-yards, of talking familiarly with the men, and of boasting of his own exploits with adze and broad-axe; so that every shipwright in the colony swore by him, as a Mussulman does by his beard.

"It is certain he never learned the

trade of gentleman," asserted De Meneval, with vivacity.

"We have a saying that a carpenter is known by his chips."

"*Pas mal.* But how do you account for the rapid advancement of Sir William?"

"Easily enough. When a boy, he dreamed he would live to be a great man. Impressed with that idea, it has become the sole, the dominant principle of his life. I wager that his dream comes true."

"As to that, we also have a proverb," said De Meneval—"'*Songe est toujours mensonge.*'"

"Well, we shall see who is right: my belief is an intuition."

"And mine an antipathy."

"*Au revoir*," said Nelson, putting on his hat. "This is the hour that the Council sits. I shall soon despatch your affair, and return with an order for your liberation."

"You are the pink of chivalry, my dear Nelson, and if ever the fortune of war puts you in our power, remember De Meneval." Nelson then went out.

The fall of Port Royal, followed as it immediately was by the submission of all Acadia, was in every way a fortunate stroke, and could not fail of giving considerable *éclat* to the principal actor in bringing these results about. Sir William, dazzled by his triumph, which was certainly an easy one, proceeded to put in execution a far more audacious project.

Although he was again ignored in organizing the expedition against Quebec, Nelson was by no means forgotten. The Council manifested its recollection by levying a contribution which certainly argued a high estimate of his value in one way, if not in another. And Nelson paid the assessment promptly, if not cheerfully, though in doing so he begged the Council to observe that the present governor of New France was a man of great energy, firmness, and experience in war; and that in his own judgment, derived from personal knowledge of its great natural strength, Quebec could only be carried by a *coup de main*. The preparations of Sir William Phips, he added, forbade the supposition that he meant to lay formal siege to the place.

Sir William replied, with marked asperity, that he had his majesty's royal warrant for the undertaking, and that Frontenac, however brave he might be in the estimation of those who habitually exalted the prowess of the enemy at the expense of their own side, should learn that one Englishman was always a match for two Frenchmen in arms. For his own part, he averred that, unworthy as he accounted himself of this high mark of his sovereign's favor, he, Sir William Phips, would, by God's blessing, either sup, a conqueror, in the Castle of Quebec, or, in the memorable words of King William to the French envoy, he would "'die in the last ditch.'"

The English fleet having cast anchor below Quebec, Sir William formally summoned Count Frontenac in the name of William and Mary, King and Queen of England, etc., to render the city and its dependencies within the hour. "It is now ten o'clock," said the envoy, presenting his watch to the count; "I am commanded to wait his excellency's answer until eleven."

"I shall not make you wait so long," replied the count. "Tell your general that I know no King William; that the Prince of Orange is a usurper who has violated the most sacred ties of blood in dethroning his father-in-law; and that I know no other sovereign in England than King James the Second. Does your general imagine," he added,

with a gesture of disdain, "that, even had he offered me more honorable terms, and that I were in the humor to accept them, all these gentlemen you see would counsel me to put faith in a man who has broken the treaty of Port Royal—in a rebel who has deserted his king to follow the party of the Prince of Orange?"

The envoy, uneasy at this brusque reception, and not caring to repeat this insolent language to Sir William, demanded the response of Count Frontenac in writing. "No," vociferated Frontenac, "I have no other to make except by the mouths of my cannon; and let your general learn that this is not the way to summon a man like me. Let him do the best he may on his part, as I am resolved to do on mine own. Begone!"

Sir William landed thirteen hundred men on the side of Beauport; but, meeting a vigorous resistance, they were unable to advance beyond the river St. Charles, which flowed between them and the city. The fleet was ranged in order of battle, by Phips, within cannon-shot of the fortifications; but its fire did little damage to the besieged, while that from the enemy's batteries was so well directed and so incessant that the English ships were compelled to drop down the river to their old anchorage, much shattered, and with the loss of a considerable number in killed and wounded. After several days passed in feeble and useless attempts, Sir William, possessing none of that antique heroism which should dictate the burning of his ships, to the end that his army, deprived of the means of retreat, might resolve to conquer or die, was compelled to renounce all hope of reducing the place. The land-forces were re-embarked. The fleet, after *sustaining* a terrible *tempest, from which it* suffered far more than from the enemy's shot, returned to Boston in a deplorable condition. Sir William was furious; and the Reverend Cotton Mather hurriedly pigeon-holed the sermon he had written commemorating the triumph of the English arms, predicting the coming downfall of the great scarlet courtesan of Rome.

We shall not attempt to portray the dejection, the shame, or the exasperation with which the news of this defeat was received. All hope of laying Quebec at the feet of King William, and of reclaiming the ancient charter as its price, was now at an end. It was, however, determined to secure Port Royal, and, if possible, a permanent foothold in Acadia, both as a guarantee to the remote English settlements, and a vantage-ground from which to direct future and, it was hoped, more fortunate enterprises against the French. Preparations were at once set on foot for that end. Our acquaintance, Colonel Tyng, was named governor of the conquered province, and a vessel made ready with all despatch to transport him, with a company of soldiers, to Port Royal.

At this point a new difficulty arose. The inhabitants of Acadia being French, with a sprinkling of Indians, who were firmly attached to French rule, it was clearly as important to reconcile them to a change of masters, as to secure, by politic measures, their adhesion to the new order of things. For this purpose the new governor frankly owned himself disqualified. The Council, therefore, cast about for an agent whose knowledge of their language, customs, and religion—their wants, their resources, and their trade—might win the confidence of the Acadians, and thus pave the way to eventual and, it was hoped, absolute

alienation from the crown of France. To find a person possessing at once such varied yet indispensable endowments seemed likely to prove the stumbling-block of the expedition.

Feeling that his own insufficiency was partly the cause of this dilemma, Tyng ventured, as a *dernier resort*, to suggest the unpopular name of Nelson. "'Tis for you to decide," he had said; "but Nelson is the only man in all the colony for your purpose."

A warm debate ensued, in which the partisans of Sir William Phips objected that Nelson was more French than English, while his pretensions to the seigniory of Acadia would naturally dispose him to promote his own ends rather than to forward those the Council had so much at heart. A majority, however, favoring the appointment, it was decided to tender it to Nelson, and he was accordingly notified to present himself before the Council on the following day.

"Don't you think," observed one of the more liberal councillors to a colleague, "that we shall have to finish by treating these Churchmen like Christians?"

"What I think," responded the other, "is, that they should be tied neck and heels together and shipped out of the jurisdiction, not to return on pain of death. And I should like to see it done," he added, bringing his fist down upon the table.

"But I don't exactly like the look of it," pursued the first speaker. "It sits ill on my stomach to ask the services of men we have not only prejudged, but cut off from all hope of reward."

"Let them quit the country, if they are not satisfied," was the curt rejoinder.

"But this Nelson rendered valuable *aid during the late troubles*," urged the *moderate councillor*.

"There it is again! Let one of those upstarts but lift a finger for the country which protects, which nourishes them — to its great scandal be it spoken!—and our ears are split with hosannas to his praise. Bah! how I hate these fellows, that are always thrusting their noses into other people's business, and when they have done you a favor, in spite of yourself, are presently demanding a recompense! I would as lief be stopped on the highway by any cut-purse," growled he of the old dispensation.

"Nelson has never asked anything for himself."

"Because he has always such good friends at court to ask for him," rejoined the incorrigible Puritan, with a meaning look.

"Don't you think the least said about protection the better?"

"Tush! you know the story of him who warmed a viper in his bosom?"

"The serpent did right to sting, if his cruel benefactor meant only to set his heel upon its head."

"For my part, the sight of your Churchman always gives me the same sensations as when I see a snake; and I always kill a snake whenever I see one," retorted the uncompromising one.

Nelson reasoned, with unassailable logic, that if the Council sent for him it was because they had need of him. He therefore presented himself at the hour appointed. In a few words Governor Bradstreet acquainted him with the purport of the Council's decision. That honorable body, he said, were not ignorant of the knowledge Nelson had of Acadia. It reposed the fullest confidence in his ability to aid to the utmost the designs of their majesty's ministers against the common enemy. The Council would not lay its commands upon him, but, relying upon his

zeal for the service of his king, had named him its agent to establish Colonel Tyng in his new government. His instructions would be more largely set forth in case he accepted the commission.

Nelson hesitated. His first impulse was to decline the trust; his second, to reflect upon it. Beyond question the offer was little honorable in itself; but would not a refusal put an end to his usefulness in the future? Would it not put a weapon in the hands of his enemies, and consign him definitely, decisively to that obscurity in which they meant to keep him—to that purgatory of ardent minds, inaction? Thus much seemed clear enough. "Who knows," he thought, pursuing the train of his reflections—"who knows but I may find in Acadia the means of reclaiming the indemnity, and of retrieving at the same time the foolish precipitancy of Sir William Phips? I can do nothing, am nothing, here. While there!—who knows what may happen? Let us go to Acadia, then, as envoy-extraordinary of the illustrious governor, Council, and deputies of the Massachusetts; as confidential adviser, and, at need, scapegoat of his excellency the governor of Acadia." So he finished by accepting; and as nothing now delayed the expedition, it sailed with a fair wind for its destination.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXPEDITION TO PORT ROYAL.

THE *Broad Arrow*, which was of the somewhat peculiar rig called in that day a snow, shaped her course along the coast, passed the rocky promontory of Cape Anne, the cluster of inhospitable islets lying off the mouth of the Piscataqua, the solitary peak of Agamenticus, and at nightfall cast anchor under the shelter of one of the numerous islands of Casco Bay, to await the rising of the moon. At this time, when neither bell nor beacon guided the mariner's way, the navigation of those seas demanded his utmost skill and vigilance.

A rare Indian-summer's day, a twilight which was the sombre reflection of a magnificent sunset, were succeeded by a night of enchanting beauty. The full moon came up out of the sea in unclouded splendor, poised its glowing shield an instant on the horizon's edge, as if saying to a waiting world, "Lo! here am I!" and slowly took up its majestic march in the heavens. The velvet waves, glossy, lustrous, and tipped with silver, rose and fell in harmonious cadence. The heavens, lighted little by little as the moon rose higher and higher, displayed their vast dome glittering with stars; while the stars seemed to indicate the presence of eternal day shining through the dusky curtains of the night. Like a bird of the night, bathing its breast in tranquil waters, the vessel threaded her way among the islands of the Maine coast.

Wrapped in his cloak, Nelson walked the deck absorbed in the multitude of his reflections. No sound save the startled flight of sea-fowl broke the stillness. Now and then he saw a light faintly twinkling in some fisherman's hut, or the fire of an Indian encampment blazing on the distant shore. It was necessary to keep a good watch, for they were now approaching a domain continually traversed by war parties of the enemy—the scene of many sanguinary encounters—the "Dark and Bloody Ground" of New England.

Moreover, the thoughts that crowded upon the young man's memory banished sleep. From time to time he stopped in his walk to gaze upon the

trailing moonlight, quivering like a chain of exquisite workmanship cast upon the fettered sea — at the silver-crusted waves dashed aside by the vessel's prow—at the full-orbed and radiant moon, hung, like a splendid decoration, on the bosom of the night. There was something in this unearthly splendor that affected his spirits strangely; something that subjugated human passion in the overwhelming sense of human insignificance.

It was now time to change the watch. Alden, who, we should not have forgotten to say, commanded the company of soldiers on board, reminding Nelson that the night was wearing away, asked him if he would not go below.

"I feel little inclination to sleep," replied Nelson. "The night is so fine, and our progress so swift, that the voyage will come to an end but too quickly."

"Would it annoy you, then, to have a companion in your walk?"

"Quite the contrary. Besides, since we are embarked on the same errand, why not be good comrades?"

"With all my heart: I was afraid you bore me no good-will; for, to be frank," said the young soldier, in some confusion, "you owe me none."

"Oh, I bear no malice!" rejoined Nelson; "there, let that convince you," offering his hand.

The soldier grasped it warmly. The two young men, after taking a few turns of the deck, seated themselves in the bow, where a good lookout might be had.

"This is my first voyage," commenced Alden; "but to you, I believe, the coast is well known."

"Yes; there is hardly a creek or an inlet that is not an old acquaintance. Do you see yonder island?" pointing *to a strip of high land* about two miles *distant.*

"Distinctly. Hark! I hear the sea breaking upon the rocks," said Alden, listening. "And stay! either I am deceived, or I see a light twinkling in the darkness," he immediately added.

"You are right. The island is Monhegan, the early rendezvous of the fishing and discovery ships despatched hither by the noble lords-adventurers; were it not in shadow you might distinguish the cabins and storehouses grouped about the little harbor. Here," continued Nelson, turning to the mainland, "is Pemaquid, the bone of contention between ourselves and our Gallic neighbors."

"Ah!" said his companion, looking intently toward the spot directed by Nelson's finger, "I was there with Sir Edmund Andros in '88, after it had been ransacked by those red devils of Abenaquis. And a sorry time we had of it," shaking his head.

"According to report, the campaign was a good deal arduous and very little glorious."

"Ay, you may well say so. Forced marches, bad provisions, long vigils, and short bivouacs, did the business. We were every day losing some of our number by sickness, exposure, or ambuscades, while not one solitary Indian was slain or captured."

"We also heard," observed Nelson, "that all the rum the army drank was poisoned; and that as fast as any fell sick, the surgeons had Sir Edmund's order to quietly despatch them."

Both laughed heartily. "We should have drank," returned Alden, "poison or no poison; the difficulty was to get it."

The night passed thus: Nelson recounting the traditions of the, to him, familiar coast, Alden listening with marked interest to the recital. The faint light of day already streaked the east when they separated, each to catch

a few moments' slumber, while the *Broad Arrow* gallantly breasted the waters of Penobscot Bay.

When Nelson again came on deck the snow was coasting the shore of Mount Desert Island, whose gray summits glowed in the warm October sun like the points of a gilded crown. As they drew by the opening of the broad sound, which almost divides the island, the lookout eagerly pointed to the shore, exclaiming, at the same instant, "Arms! arms! Indians! Indians!"

At this cry everything was commotion on board. The soldiers snatched their weapons and hurried to the waist, where they instinctively took their ranks; while Nelson, Tyng, and the master gazed with all their eyes in the direction of the shore, to which the watchful seaman's finger still pointed. Every one on board plainly saw half a dozen canoes hauled up in the shelter of a little cove, which had the forest for a background, and was thickly fringed with alders, sumachs, and tangled shrubbery. A few yards from the water's edge a fire was burning among the rocks, around which a dozen savages had been squatted, but who sprang to their feet upon the apparition of the vessel's sails gliding into view. On both sides the surprise was complete.

"It is an Abenaquis war-party," said Nelson to his companions, after a long and steady look. "See you not how hideously they are painted, and that no squaws are among them?"

"Before they could answer a terrific yell burst from the group of savages, enlightened, it would seem, as to the true character of the vessel by a brief investigation; a yell taken up and prolonged by the mountains with startling distinctness, and faintly echoing back from the farther shore of the sound. Having *thus expressed their* surprise *and uttered their defiance,* the savages ran to their arms, which were leaning against the nearest trees, and in seeming bravado—for the snow was beyond musket-range—discharged a few shots, which cut the water fifty yards from their mark. After this the outcries were renewed; only this time they were accompanied with insulting gestures, the nature of which we do not care to explain, or even allude to, except to illustrate a trait of the Indian character which seems so diametrically opposed to his habitual stoicism. Some brandished their hatchets, others impotently spat at their foes, and still others derisively beckoned them to come nearer.

While this harmless pantomime was in progress, one savage, bolder than the rest, ran to the farthest seaward point of the cove, leaping like a cat from ledge to ledge, until he stood on the summit of a rock nearly isolated by the tide. Steadying himself a moment, he cried out in broken English, "You want Injuns? here plenty! me Madockawando, kill Englishman's squaw!" Having achieved this taunt, he stood like some antique statue on its pedestal, his right arm uplifted, his left grasping the barrel of his rifle.

The snow mounted two swivels, capable of carrying a light ball with tolerable precision. One of these was now trained on the camp, and the master ran to the galley for a firebrand with which to discharge it. Nelson, Tyng, and Alden stood in the waist; the soldiers and sailors collected in little knots to watch the effect of the shot.

At this moment the unwary savages were huddled together in fatal proximity. A few pointed to the snow, some to the canoes, others to the farther shore of the sound; but these signs of indecision disappeared in a simultaneous rush for the canoes. Now or never was the opportunity. Twenty voices shouted "Fire!" in the same

breath. The master waved his hand for the helmsman to ease off the snow a little, the gun was unmasked, and the brand touched to the priming.

When the smoke lifted, a canoe was seen to be sinking, three or four black heads dotted the water, and a dead body floated for an instant in the current before it disappeared. This reception seemed to dishearten the savages to such a degree that they beat a precipitate retreat up the beach and plunged into the woods. Until this shot they were far from suspecting that the snow carried cannon, or was strongly manned. Their astonishment was therefore extreme. A mournful whoop, announcing the death of a comrade, was answered by a wild English cheer, which was in turn echoed by an appalling yell, apparently proceeding from the other side of the sound.

All looked. While the attention of those on board was fully occupied with the camp, a score or more canoes had pushed out from the north-east harbor, and were now being swiftly driven through the water by the nervous arms of a hundred Abenaquis warriors. Their purpose was plain; they meant to intercept the vessel before she could come up with them, and, without doubt, attempt its capture. There was no mistaking the meaning of the manœuvre; but if a doubt existed, it vanished when the savage flotilla, after having gained its desired position, lay motionless in the track of the vessel. The yell had also drawn the discomfited party from their cover. They regained their canoes, and silently put themselves once more in pursuit. The vessel was thus between two fires.

The wind had almost died away. What there was came in occasional puffs, which forced the *Broad Arrow a few rods on her course*, and then left *her, with shaking sails*, almost as soon. There was now no chance to gain an offing unless the breeze freshened, and this was scarcely expected to happen under the highlands of the island. Nevertheless, the distance between the snow and the waiting canoes gradually lessened, the uneasiness of those on board increasing in proportion as it was seen that the combat about to ensue would be short, sharp, and decisive. Many anxious glances were cast aloft for the first evidences of an increase of wind.

"Keep her off all you may," shouted the master to the helmsman; then turning to Nelson, "if the breeze wakes up a bit, sir, we may show these murdering devils our heels."

"Not so," objected Nelson, "steer boldly on for the middle of the canoes; it is our only salvation."

The master gave the order, but shook his head as he went off grumbling to arm his crew. Tyng and Alden were busy distributing the soldiers under protection of the bulwarks. The swivels were loaded to the muzzle with musket-bullets, the crew were supplied with pikes and cutlasses to a man. Nelson had picked up a spare musket, and was engaged in loading it when joined by Tyng and Alden.

"Give us your orders, captain," said the former.

"'Tis for you to command here," replied Nelson, coolly returning his ramrod to its place. "I shall do my part as a volunteer."

"Your orders," repeated Alden, impatiently. "You have the best head for this sort of business. Don't desert us at the pinch."

"Very well, gentlemen, since you insist, and since there is no time for parley. You, Tyng, take the starboard, and you, Alden, the larboard. When I give the word, let the men rise and pour in their fire. Smallpiece"—to the

master—"scatter your men behind the soldiers: let them give an account of such of the redskins as may succeed in boarding. Now, silence all, for this, I warrant, is to be no child's play." Seeing that every one was at his post, he walked forward and, leaping on the windlass, measured the full extent of the danger that threatened them.

Nelson counted twenty canoes, each carrying four or five warriors, all of whom, except the one who steered, had laid aside his paddle, and now held his rifle across his knees. Every swarthy and hideous visage turned upon him a look of exultant hate, in which it was easy to read the hope of victory and the thirst for revenge—the two dominant passions of the hour. The fleet remained absolutely without movement during Nelson's investigation, except that a few among the savages stealthily raised their rifles, without sound, except now and then a subdued exclamation on the appearance of him they took for the English leader. During this mutual examination each combatant was mentally estimating the other's strength, and considering how the most chances of success might be appropriated to himself. But here the advantage was wholly in favor of Nelson, who saw and counted the number of his foes, while they did not even guess the vessel's real force. Nelson was a thinking, responsible man; not, we hasten to say, insensible to danger, like the conventional hero of romance; far from it: his intellect demanded to be confronted with the danger, to measure it fully, to look it fairly in the face, and to have his moral say to his physical nature, "Now I understand; now you may depend on me." This done, he felt himself ready to grapple with it, however great, however frightful it might appear. And *this, in our opinion, is real courage.* The man who can reason fear out of himself is inaccessible to panic, incapable of disgracing himself or his cause. He is sure of himself, and you of him.

"Well!" said Nelson, to himself, after his critical examination was ended, "two to one is not such terrible odds, if we only had an apronful of wind. As it is, we shall kill half of them, and be overpowered by the other half; but it is going to be hot while it lasts. Ha!"

This exclamation was caused by the sudden appearance of a figure standing erect in the prow of the foremost canoe, which he easily recognized for that of a white man, notwithstanding the sunburnt skin and semi-savage dress might have deceived a less practised eye. This personage, seeing Nelson expose himself thus unconcernedly, waved his hand courteously, and Nelson immediately replied by a similar gesture. At the same time, the crack of two or three rifles, and spiteful whiz of as many bullets above his head, admonished him that the enemy were becoming impatient. His observation being finished, he jumped down from the windlass. The snow was now within a hundred yards of the savages, who kept up a dropping fire, entirely harmless, it is true, but which caused the hearts of some of the young soldiers to beat faster than was their wont. Nelson looked astern. Although the pursuing canoes were steadily closing the gap between them and the vessel, their movements were wary, and he perceived that they meant to join their comrades only when the snow was fully engaged with the fleet. He then looked to windward, and saw, with inexpressible joy, a ripple on the water; while a light gust, the forerunner of the coming breeze, filled the snow's sails, and pushed the vessel rapidly across the

space remaining between her and the canoes. The savages now directed their fire at the steersman, who almost immediately fell, pierced with balls, across the tiller, which he still firmly grasped.

"Scarlet shall steer us through this. His dead body will hold her steady, captain," said Smallpiece, drawing Nelson's attention to the occurrence.

"Good: we can ill spare another man for the post; only look to it the snow does not yaw when the breeze strikes us. Now, my lads," exclaimed Nelson, cheerily, "short speeches and hard knocks are the order of the day; but, God willing, we will see who can hit hardest. When I give the word, send every bullet to its mark. Bethink you, captivity or the scalping-knife is the enemy's mercy. Don't cheer till you have emptied your guns; then shout, and may I never see New England again if we don't whip the rascals handsomely!"

Perceiving the intention of the vessel to close with them, the flotilla separated in two divisions, thus leaving an open passage between. Two Indians in each canoe now took their paddles, and at the leader's signal the two divisions moved slowly on in a line nearly parallel with, but converging upon, the vessel's course.

As the *Broad Arrow* forged into the gap of open water, the savages gave one deafening yell, and came swarming down upon the devoted craft, like a legion of fiends let loose from hell. The warriors dropped their rifles, and, grasping their knives and tomahawks, prepared to spring into the chains the instant a canoe touched the vessel's side. The English awaited the onset with pale lips, clinched teeth, and flashing eyes.

Nelson stood near the foremast, with *half a dozen of the best* marksmen around him. When he felt the light shock of the canoes, he stamped his foot upon the deck, and in a voice heard above the horrible din shouted, "Give it to the murdering dogs! Aim low! fire!"

The vessel trembled with the discharge and the wild English cheer that burst from the lips of the soldiers. Obedient to their leader's voice, which still rose above the battle, they threw themselves with fury upon such of the assailants as had gained a footing on the bulwarks. The cheer was answered by a volley from two or three canoes, which the prudence of the enemy's leader held in reserve.

"Don't stop to load! Lay on with the breech!" thundered Tyng, from the midst of the *mêlée*, clubbing his own musket.

"Edge or point! Strike them down! Into the sea with them!" vociferated Alden, firing his musket in the face of a stalwart Abenaqui who was in the act of leaping to the deck, and who rolled, gasping, at the feet of his enemies. A dozen warriors, perhaps, succeeded in mounting the rigging, two or three even reached the deck; but the first either fell under the fire of Nelson's sharp-shooters, or were thrust back into the sea by the pikemen; while the last were despatched by the cutlasses of the crew. Half a dozen canoes still grappled with the vessel, the infuriated savages driving their knives into her side for a hold. A handful of grenades dropped into them caused the terrified occupants to leap overboard, leaving their knives sticking in the timbers.

"Victory!" shouted Alden. "Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted the conquerors.

"Not so fast, captain; it is a repulse. Therefore stand we ready to receive them in case they mean to try again," observed Nelson. But at this

juncture the breeze struck the vessel. Her sails filled, she careened before it, and began to move through the water. The master threw down his cutlass and ran to the helm. The smoke dispersed, discovering the whole field of battle. "Shout, Alden, as much as you like," exclaimed Nelson; "it is now our turn."

What was seen when the smoke blew away was this: Three or four canoes were shattered or overset. As many more were busy picking up the survivors, some of whom showed, by their frantic struggles, that they were badly wounded. The rest of the fleet had either drifted or paddled out of range, and exhibited all the confusion incident to its disastrous repulse. During this lull in the combat they were joined by the canoes in chase.

Nelson was determined to give them no time to recover from their too-apparent disorder. Seeing that the division farthest seaward seemed most crippled, he ordered the snow's head to be laid for it, and when close aboard a fresh discharge of the swivel completed its discomfiture. Notwithstanding the reckless example of their white leader, the savages thought only of urging their canoes out of the fire. In vain he commanded, besought them to return to the attack; they were deaf to the appeal. He could only shake his still smoking musket at the vessel.

This man's Indian head-dress having fallen off, exhibited a profusion of light curling hair falling upon his neck, and, of course, revealed his true character to the snow's company. It was the signal for a new outburst:

"Death to the white Indian!" "No quarter for the bloody Papist!" "This to thy accursed heart!" were the shouts which accompanied the pointing of twenty muskets, while the object of these menaces stood in the erect position he had first assumed, a disdainful smile around his mouth, a wicked gleam in his blue eye. The man was doomed, to a certainty, without rescue.

Nelson sprang into the rigging, and, striking up the guns with his sword, exclaimed,

"*Hola, Castin, c'est vous!*"

"*Merci, chevalier,*" returned the Frenchman, joining an expressive wave of the hand to his words, "*quelle heureuse rencontre pour moi; mais ou, diable, allez-vous, donc?*"

"What is that to you? Draw off your warriors and leave us to continue our route, peaceably," rejoined Nelson, in the same language.

"*Pardieu!* you jest, it seems to me; but if we are free to go, we others, *partons.*"

"With these words the Baron Saint Castin seated himself in the stern of his canoe, and spoke to his gaping warriors, who dipped their paddles in the sea with the vigor of men intent only on putting a safe distance between themselves and their pursuers. When the light bark had gone two or three times its length, the Indians, at Castin's command, stopped paddling. He again rose to his feet, and turning toward the spot where Nelson still stood, exclaimed,

"*Bienfait pour bienfait!*"

"*Ce qui veut dire?*"

"*Méfiez-vous de ce maudit Guillaume Phibs!*"

"Perdition take me, captain!" ejaculated Tyng, unable longer to keep back his vexation at seeing Castin escaping before his eyes, "you carry your chivalric notions a little too far! This Castin is the very archfiend of them all. Why did you come between us?"

"Softly, colonel; you do not know this man's power over the Indians. Our mission is pacific. Castin's death would have cost us a ten years' war.

Castin living, owes us a debt he will not be slow to repay, on occasion. No: believe me our encounter ends most fortunately for our plans."

"Be it so; but when swords are out, my diplomacy is laid on the shelf for the time being. I should have liked, though," shaking his fist savagely at the flying canoes, "to have sent the last of the skulking vagabonds to the bottom."

"We have given them a lesson they will not soon forget; but now my advice is to carry a press of sail, and to give these brave fellows some refreshment," replied Nelson, who was strongly preoccupied with the question, "Why had Saint Castin assembled his warriors at Mount Desert?"

The scattered canoes had now dwindled into black specks, and were fast nearing the shore. Two or three of Alden's men had been wounded in the engagement, and one poor fellow lay lifeless on the deck, with his skull split open by an Indian axe. These bloody traces of the action were removed. The breeze freshened, the vessel bounded over the rising seas, and the company, relieved from all apprehension of further danger, celebrated their victory with an abundance of good cheer, enlivened by song and merriment, and washed down with an extra allowance of Old Jamaica.

The remainder of the day and night passed without further incident. Toward the middle watch a thick fog beginning to steal in from the ocean, the snow was headed for the land, and, rounding a wooded point, dropped her anchor in the estuary of a noble river.

The following morning found the voyagers still enveloped in a fog so dense as to render objects at a cable's length from the vessel indistinguishable. But as all on board knew that a few hours' run would bring them to their destination, the soldiers set about cleaning their arms and making preparations for the expected landing. About ten o'clock the fog suddenly lifted, when, to the unspeakable dismay of the *Broad Arrow's* company, a heavily armed cruiser, the white flag drooping from her mast-head, was seen lying directly across the entrance of the river.

Escape was impossible. The cruiser's drums beat to quarters, and a shot ricochetted along the placid surface of the river. Nevertheless the snow's cable was slipped, the jib hoisted, and the soldiers mustered; but a second shot from the frigate, which sent a column of foam high in air, warned the English that they might next expect a broadside. A hurried consultation was held to consider an escape to the woods. But this desperate expedient—for a band of fugitives hundreds of miles from the nearest English settlement, hopeless, indeed, in a country where their every step would be beset by enemies—was reluctantly abandoned. The *Broad Arrow* was accordingly hove to, her colors lowered, and all eyes became centred on the boat which was seen approaching.

"Gentlemen," said Nelson to his companions, "we are in a trap. There is nothing left but submission. Here, my brave fellows," he continued, addressing the soldiers, "is my purse; share it among you; for nothing is so useful to a prisoner as money." With that he tossed his purse to the sergeant, folded his arms, and quietly awaited the sequel.

He had not long to wait. The boat swept around the snow's quarter, and an officer in the uniform of the French navy sprang lightly to the deck. Glancing around him, he advanced toward the group of which Nelson, Tyng, and Alden were the central figures, and

judging, no doubt, from Tyng's military garb that he was the person with whom he had to do, accosted him in the best English he could command.

"Messieurs, the Anglais, behold me desolate to make of myself your *prisonnier de guerre. Mais non*—" stammered the puzzled Frenchman, checking himself on perceiving the grinning countenances around him.

"Tell the jabbering idiot, Nelson, I don't understand French," growled Tyng.

"If Monsieur will speak French," said Nelson, in that language, "I will undertake to make known his wishes."

"*À la bonne heure!*" exclaimed the officer, with sudden animation, for the little English he knew obstinately stuck in his throat. "Who are you?"

"English, as Monsieur has said."

"Whence come you?"

"From Boston."

"Where are you going?"

"We will thank Monsieur to tell us."

"Your business?"

"Peaceable traders in skins and furs."

"Ah, yes! Skins flayed from the Indians, and peltries torn from the head," said the officer, significantly drawing his finger around his scalp. Nelson smiled.

"And those people there," continued the questioner, pointing to Alden's men, who still grasped their weapons, and surveyed him with evil eyes, "are also peaceable traders, I presume."

"Monsieur knows how much lead and iron is prized by the savages."

"Do I know it! But in volleys of musketry and pike-thrusts! *Ma foi*, that is a little too strong!"

"They are, nevertheless, our sole cargo; and very much at the service of Monsieur and his scalping friends."

"*Dame, assez!*" said the Frenchman, beating a precipitate retreat toward the gangway. "*À moi vous autres!*" he shouted to his boat's crew, a score of whom, armed to the teeth, immediately scrambled up the vessel's side and surrounded him. "Gentilmans Anglais," drawing his hanger and returning toward the *Broad Arrow's* people, "*Bas les armes!*" Nelson repeated the order to the soldiers, who sullenly obeyed. "*Maintenant*, Cap Rouge," continued the officer, to a quartermaster, "*prenez le gouvernail: et vous, Messieurs*," to Nelson and Tyng, "*faites vos preparatifs pour m'accompagner à bord la frégate. Hatez-vous.*"

The *Broad Arrow* being brought to under the guns of the frigate *L'Envieux*, Nelson and Tyng were conveyed on board, where they were courteously received by her commander, who, after listening to the report of his lieutenant, requested to know whom he had the pleasure of receiving.

"Colonel Edward Tyng, Governor of Acadia," said Nelson, indicating his companion.

"Pardon, monsieur," said the Frenchman, smiling, "but Port Royal is at present in the possession of His Most Christian Majesty. It is De Villebon tells you so." Tyng and Nelson exchanged glances.

"And you, sir?" continued the captain, to Nelson.

"John Nelson, of Boston, merchant," modestly replied the latter.

"Charmed to meet you, monsieur, even as a prisoner. Was it not with you De Meneval lodged at Boston?"

Nelson bowed. "M. de Meneval did me the honor to make use of my house for some weeks," he said.

"On the faith of De Villebon, I am glad to know you. You shall be treated with the same consideration you have shown. For the present, however, I must send you to Port Royal, since I am myself bound for a differ-

ent destination; still, I shall hope to render your detention as little irksome as possible." This was said with great affability.

"If your affair is with Saint Castin," hazarded Nelson, all his senses on the alert, "it will miscarry."

De Villebon started. His eyes roved furtively from Nelson to Tyng for an explanation. "Who has betrayed us?" he exclaimed.

"Castin himself."

"How! Castin? but it is impossible."

"It is the truth, however." Nelson then acquainted Villebon with the events already known to the reader, taking care to represent Castin's defeat as complete as possible. Villebon listened in silence, and when Nelson concluded, took two or three turns across the deck.

"Well, Messieurs," he said, stopping before them, "I will be frank with you. My orders are to send all English prisoners to Quebec; moreover," he added, with an ironical smile, "I should hardly know what to do with gentlemen capable of what you have just done me the honor to recount."

Tyng could not suppress an exclamation. "To Quebec! send us to Quebec!" he stammered.

"You say that, my dear sir," said the amused Frenchman, "as if you were going to Siberia, instead of to the gay capital of New France. But His Excellency Count Frontenac tolerates no departure from his orders, so go you must. *Adieu, et bon voyage.*"

The two friends were then reconducted on board the snow, which, after the transfer of half the English to the frigate, set sail in charge of a prize crew for Quebec. Tyng was thoughtful, Alden inconsolable, Nelson gloomy. *All at once Tyng looked* up. "What *was it that so upset* this Villebon when you told him of our fight with Castin?" he asked of the latter.

"You shall hear: Castin and his warriors were waiting for the frigate to make a descent on our coasts. I suspected as much from the first; now I am sure of it. Our appearance frustrated that purpose, thank Heaven!"

"That is something; but I wonder I had not thought of it," rejoined the late governor of Acadia.

"It makes my head ache to think how we are going to get out of this scrape," said Alden, peevishly.

"I advise you to sleep on it," returned Nelson, wrapping himself in his cloak, and composedly stretching himself at full length on the deck.

CHAPTER XII.

QUEBEC.

After a long and sufficiently tedious voyage, the details of which would be as fatiguing to the reader as unprofitable for us to pursue, the prize, late one November afternoon, cast anchor in the magnificent basin of Quebec. The banks of the river were already buried under six inches of snow. Soiled patches of it spotted the cold gray granite of the promontory, streaked the ravines, and covered the roofs of the lower town. The Canadian winter, almost Siberian in severity and duration, had already begun.

The vessel's sails were furled, and, yielding to the tension of her cable, she swung gracefully into the current and remained motionless. This manœuvre announced the termination of the voyage to those on board; and to those on shore, the white flag, hoisted above the red, made the character of the new arrival sufficiently clear. In a few minutes the greater part of the population,

visibly agitated by the event, ran to meet the canoe which was seen pushing off from the vessel's side.

The scene was not new to Nelson, who, having already made two voyages to Quebec in the time of the late governor, had a perfect knowledge of the place and its environs. He could even recognize the little auberge he had inhabited, and the warehouses of the merchants with whom he had transacted business. But these brief researches conducted nowhere except to the unpleasant yet unavoidable conclusion that his lodgings, for some time to come, would probably be a prison, while his business, such as it was, would be despatched at the château, with a celerity quite unknown to the easy-going, methodical merchants of the Ville Basse. Thus, Nelson was naturally enough more occupied with speculations upon the reception he and his fellow-prisoners might expect, the treatment he and they might encounter, the probable period of their detention, and questions of like near concern and import, than with the appearance of the city itself. To him it was nothing more, nothing less, than a prison. During the voyage the idea of escape or the hope of recapture had been constantly present in his mind; but the vigilance of his captors rendered the first hopeless of accomplishment, and the last, always desperate, had gradually faded as the snow neared its destination. And now that destination had been reached. From this point of view, and in the gray gloom of a November afternoon, the rock of Quebec was unprepossessing enough.

It was, however, quite different with his companions, who, for the moment, forgot their guards, the privations of the voyage which promised to be the prelude to still *greater* hardships; for*got everything in the* unbounded admiration which the sight of the city excited within them. And we may well pardon this forgetfulness, for few sights are more striking or more memorable.

Quebec, at once fortress, capital, and port of commerce, held to the struggling dependencies of Louis XIV. the same vital relation that Boston held to New England. It was the cradle, the heart, the shield of New France. Endowed by nature with a position almost impregnable, it had attracted the sure and experienced eye of Champlain, its founder, as in the previous century it attracted the notice of the intrepid Jacques Cartier, its discoverer.

High above the adjacent shores, its precipices dominating and intercepting the majestic river, rose an almost inaccessible rock. From the dizzy summit of Cape Diamond the sometimes abrupt, sometimes flattened ridges, swept downward to the little river St. Charles, which, after bathing the cliffs at their feet, mingled its handful of drops with the mighty volume of the St. Lawrence. Here was the vestibule of Canada. Below the city the river expanded in a basin two miles broad, in which the navies of the world might ride. It encircled the fertile island of Orleans in its embrace, and henceforth flowed on, no longer a river, straitened by banks, but a gulf, between mountains, to the sea—rather, we should say, the ocean itself came to Quebec to meet the august envoy of the great lakes. Thus on the granite of Cape Diamond Nature had written in bold and unmistakable characters that here was the gate-way of an empire, of which the great river was the plain and broad highway.

Just now not a single vessel was to be seen in the spacious haven. The bells that rang in the festival of All

Saints signalled, also, the solitude and imprisonment of winter. The last ships had hastened their departure for France. As far as the eye could reach, masses of newly formed ice dotted the surface of the river, and, like the scouts of an invading army, seemed destined to sweep it clear of every obstacle. A pervading air of sadness and desertion, intensified by the very vastness and grandeur of the scenery, settled down upon the snow-beleaguered city.

Strewed about the crest, the slopes, and, certes, we might even add the crannies and crevices of this mountain, was the old city of Quebec. Underneath, along the strand, looking as if they had fallen from the heights above, were huddled the houses of the Basse Ville. A narrow and precipitous way, bordered by houses that seemed mounting over each other's shoulders, united the lower with the upper city, whose heights the gleaming spires of the religious houses crowned with light; while the sound of church or monastery bells floated on the still autumn air, over noble river, fair seigniory, and trackless forest.

Therefore, while his enraptured companions gazed with all their eyes, Nelson meditated.

"Were you ever in Quebec?" asked Tyng of Nelson.

"Yes; twice before the war."

"Then you know the city?"

"Every hole and corner in it."

"What building is that, nearest the little river, with the steeple at the end of the principal wing?"

"That is the Hôtel Dieu, or hospital."

"And this noble one of gray stone, pierced with many windows—here on this point projecting farthest into the St. Lawrence?"

"*That is the Episcopal Palace, the most magnificent building* in Canada; and, indeed, 'tis said, few episcopal palaces in France surpass it. You see the Chapel, with the cross above—that quaint-looking structure in the Italian style—in the centre of the *corps-de-logis?* The site is a charming one, and the point on which the Palace is situated, according to some writers, gave the city its name."

"Thanks! I was thinking how one of our humble New England parsonages would look by the side of that palace."

"Very natural; but, on the other hand, there are contrasts between our clergy and theirs quite as remarkable as that you have just cited."

"What do you say?"

"This: the Jesuit friars go boldly among the Indians, live with them, share their privations, minister to their wants, follow them to war and to the chase; in a word, they carry them a visible religion which they can understand; a gospel of works which, in a little time, produces faith in that religion and that gospel. Imagine Cotton Mather living on locusts and wild honey, like these holy fathers!"

Both laughed. "You forget the Apostle Eliot," suggested Tyng.

"Not I; but he has left no successors. In Canada every priest is a sort of John Eliot, while in New England we have had but one."

"That massive-looking building encompassed by a wall, in the highest part of the city, ought to be the fortress."

"Where the white flag is flying?"

"Yes."

"You are right: that is the Château Saint Louis, the citadel of Quebec, and residence of the governor-general. The outer walls rise from the brink of the precipice, of which, in fact, they are a continuation; those sentinels you see on the ramparts look two hundred feet

down the sheer rock upon the roofs of the Ville Basse. You see the battery to the right?"

"Certainly, I see it."

"It was that battery did so much damage to Phips's squadron: the first shot carried away his ensign."

"But it seems to me the château—you see I am already picking up French names—is commanded by that high summit of naked rock beyond it."

"Cape Diamond. In reality it is so. Stay; are there not some works going on there?"

"According to appearance, it is being fortified."

"Frontenac means to finish what Nature begun, and make Quebec impregnable. Do you not see the line of palisades running from the château along the edge of the cliff to the street communicating with the lower town, which may be barricaded in half an hour; that the jetty has been armed with ships' guns; and that a score of cannon are lying there destined, probably, for the new works Frontenac is constructing? Well, all this has been done since I was here."

"Evidently they expect another visit from us. Better luck next time, say I. Apparently they do not lack for churches. I count six spires or turrets up there."

"Do you see there, in the sun, that spire behind the château?"

"Perfectly well."

"That is the Recollet church, patronized by Frontenac, who does not love the Jesuits. Now, the next cross, to the right, a little lower down, is the Jesuits': and the next the Cathedral. The long range of buildings, with two belfries, is the Seminary, where they educate priests to spread the Gospel among the heathen."

"And incite *them, in the* name of *Christ and the Blessed Virgin*, to murder their fellow-Christians," murmured Tyng.

"Hist! you must not think aloud here," said Nelson, finishing his comprehensive description.

"Recollets, Jesuits, priests! palaces, monasteries, cathedrals!" ejaculated Tyng—"where the deuce am I, then?"

"In the capital city of New France, where there is only one religion; and where you and I are equally heretics. Do not forget that."

"Monks, friars, or priests, all are alike to me."

"There are, however, priests *and* priests. The proverb says: '*Pour faire un Recollet il faut une hachette; pour un prêtre un ciseau; mais pour un Jesuite il faut un pinceau.*'"

"Which means?"

"That you can make a Franciscan with an axe, a priest with a chisel, but for a Jesuit you must have a pencil."

"As I look at it, the religious orders and the churches have taken all the fat, and left the lean for the people."

"You condense the whole history in a nutshell."

Colonel Tyng had some reason for this opinion. Besides its topographical distinctions of Upper and Lower City, Quebec at this time was divided into domains and fiefs; domains held by the crown for military or administrative purposes, by the Church, or by the different religious orders pertaining to, yet enjoying grants independent of it. In this division, it must be admitted that the lion's share had fallen into the lap of the Church. The Seminary domain, the Fabrique or Church lands, Fief St. Joseph, Hôtel Dieu, church and monastery of the Jesuits, occupied fully one-half the Haute Ville; the edifices themselves, with their high walls, deep embrasures, and solid parapets having no inadequate resemblance to the half-religious,

half-military strongholds of the Middle Ages, whose pious inmates were often called upon to stand a siege, and whose retainers were not unfrequently put to the edge of the sword. Otherwise they indicated that prelatic power, with its tithes, tributes, and ceremonials, its assumptions, its intrigues, and its vexatious meddling with temporal affairs, had planted itself, with a grasp that never relaxed, upon the rock of Quebec.

So much might be seen from the deck of the vessel, and such were, in fact, Nelson's prepossessions. But now the officer who had gone on shore at the moment the snow dropped her anchor was seen coming off, and was soon on board. His arrival was the signal for preparations to transfer the prisoners to the shore, and in half an hour they were landed at the jetty, whither the populace, male and female, crowded with eager curiosity to see the redoubted Bostonians. At every moment a thousand "*Mon Dieus*," "*sacrés*," or "*diables*" exploded on the air; while from one extremity of the throng to the other a running fire of epithets, sarcasms, and menaces, similar to a scattering discharge of musketry, saluted the prisoners as they disembarked, and was sustained by them with as much *sang froid* as a point-blank fusillade of actual bullets might have been by Cromwell's Ironsides. In this case, it is true, only the *amour propre* of the prisoners was wounded; and, furthermore, few understood the language in which they were addressed.

"*Voilà beaucoup de goddams!*" said a citizen, with his nose in the air.

"*Bonjour, Messieurs les régicides!*" said another.

"*Ciel!*" exclaimed a bony bourgeoise in a quilted petticoat and mountainous cap, which gave her the aspect of a female grenadier; "what a lot of cut-throats. Are the Bostonians, then, cannibals?"

"Monsieur," said a truculent-looking vagabond, approaching Tyng, and distorting his ugly face into a mocking smile, "M. le Gouverneur presents his very humble respects, and begs the favor of your company, yourself and friends, to dinner at the château."

A burst of ironical laughter followed this sally, which quickly changed into a howl of rage when Tyng, who comprehended the tenor of the speech by its results, lifting the fellow clear of the ground by his ears, threw him back among the crowd without apparent effort.

The guards now interfered, and while pressing the crowd back with their halberds, an officer in a handsome uniform made his way into the open space, and said, politely,

"Which is the Chevalier Nelson?"

"Here, at your service," replied that person.

"Follow me, then. I have the governor's orders to conduct you before him at once."

"At your commands, sir," said Nelson. "And these gentlemen?" he continued, pointing out Tyng and Alden to the officer.

"My orders do not concern them."

"Is there time for a word of farewell?"

"Certainly; but you understand the governor must not be kept waiting."

"A word only, and I am with you."

Nelson returned to his two companions, whom he shook cordially by the hands. "If we should not meet again," said he, in a voice intended only for their ears, "take a word of counsel from me. Open your eyes and ears, but keep your mouths as close as the tomb. Trust no one; suspect everybody. Good-bye!"

The comrades received the caution

with a look of intelligence which put Nelson quite at his ease.

Nelson waved his hand to his late companions, and the soldiers, who had learned to love and respect him in trial and adversity, shouted their adieu as he followed his guide up the rugged street leading to the château. Nelson noticed, as they walked, that the sides of the cliffs were spotted, where they had been struck by Phips's shot; while here and there a missile had ploughed up the street, torn a ragged hole in a wall, or knocked a chimney in pieces. The poverty or indifference of the inhabitants had left these evidences of the siege of the previous year uncared-for and untouched.

They passed on under the out-walls of the bishop's palace, and, turning to the left, a few rods more brought them to the enclosure of the château.

This already venerable edifice, picturesque by its commanding situation, severely simple in its architecture, was built, as Nelson said, upon the very edge of the precipice, which seemed to Quebec another Tarpeian rock. It consisted of a *corps-de-logis* of two stories, flanked at each end by pavilions surmounted by the pointed roof characteristic of the epoch of François Mansard, celebrated architect and palace-builder of the preceding reign, today very widely known by a single peculiarity of his art. Before it—or, rather, we should say behind it, since the true front of the château faced the Place d'Armes—was a platform overhanging the cliff, to which it was solidly bound by thick buttresses of masonry rising half the height of the château itself. Neither pen nor pencil can adequately portray the magnificence of the view from this aërial terrace. The Ville Basse and the basin lay beneath the black mouths of the *cannon on the ramparts.* To the left the marquisate of Beauport, sprinkled with cottages in the midst of trees, inclined its fertile shores gracefully to the river. Here the island of Orleans lay sunning its twenty miles of highly-cultivated slopes in mid-channel. There, when the sun rises clear, may be seen a thin column of water-smoke, as Ovid calls it, issuing from a cleft in the high shore. It is there the little river Montmorenci leaps, in a single bound of two hundred and fifty feet, into the St. Lawrence and disappears. To the right the heights of Levis ascended in receding terraces, forming a grand coliseum of nature, of which the basin of Quebec was the arena, the notched summits of the distant Laurentian mountains the crumbling wall. Beyond the *enceinte* of the château the ground rose rapidly some seventy feet higher to the summit of Cape Diamond; and still beyond, it stretched away in plains, destined to become historic, in the direction of Cap Rouge.

The officer opened a wicket in the postern, which he carefully shut behind him, crossed the Place d'Armes, and without halting mounted the broad steps of the château, closely followed by his prisoner. Nelson found himself within a hall, or rather antechamber, in which half a dozen musketeers were lounging on benches or chatting gayly before a roaring fire.

"Lieutenant," said Nelson's conductor to the officer on duty, "make yourself agreeable to the Chevalier Nelson for a few moments."

"With pleasure, my captain," replied the person addressed, rising and saluting his officer, who immediately turned into a corridor opening out of the main entrance hall and intersecting the building from end to end. In five minutes he reappeared, beckoned Nelson to again follow him, and stopping before a door, above which was bla

zoned the *fleur-de-lis*, lifted the latch and signed Nelson to enter. The officer then withdrew, leaving him alone in the apartment.

The audience-chamber of the château in which Nelson now found himself had windows opening upon the terrace, and consequently commanding the extensive prospect of which we were just speaking. It was moderately lofty and passably spacious, and in its appointments care had been taken to impress the savage allies of the Grand Monarque with the splendor and luxury of his viceroy. The windows were heavily draped with curtains of crimson tapestry, the spaces between being hung with complete suits of armor of the preceding century. On one side of the chimney, in which a comfortable fire was blazing brightly, the wall was decorated with a trophy of swords, daggers, pistols, and half-pikes; on the other side a similar collection of Indian weapons, spears, hatchets, arrows, and war-clubs was fancifully grouped about a shield of bark, on which was rudely traced the arms or totem of the Hurons—a beaver *sable* squatted upon a hut *argent*. A pair of richly carved paddles above, and one of snow-shoes, or raquettes, underneath the trophy, gave the design a certain artistic completeness, while the warlike power of the red and white races was not ineffectively illustrated, or rather contrasted by their arms. It was steel and iron against bark and the skins of beasts.

In the middle of the room stood a mahogany table, littered with maps, memorials, and writing materials, to which were added a belt of wampum and an elaborately carved Indian calumet, the pledges of some savage alliance. Nelson's searching eye fell on *a bundle of something* which thrilled *him with horror.* It was a cluster of ringlets but lately torn from the head of a woman—a young and beautiful woman, it seemed, for, though matted with blood, the locks were soft and silken, and still showed evidences of the pride and care of their ill-starred owner. Nelson knew just such a golden head of hair. He could not turn away his eyes or shake off the horrible associations to which these clotted tresses were the mysterious conductors. His heart was not yet sufficiently hardened to look upon them unmoved; nor was he able to repress an instinctive, an overmastering desire for vengeance. He had not recovered from the painful impression occasioned by the sight of this savage trophy, when the door opened to admit the habitual occupant of the apartment.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHÂTEAU SAINT LOUIS.

Louis de Buade, Compte de Frontenac, showed little loss of physical or mental vigor outwardly, though, at seventy, incessant wear and tear had begun to tell on a constitution and a will of iron. His eye had not lost its fire nor his step its elasticity, but a deep crease between the brows gave a look of care to his face, and bespoke the power and habit of concentrated thought. His complexion was florid, his mustache, imperial, and eyebrows white as snow. Notwithstanding a certain cast of sensuality there, the face, if not noble, had that decided distinction about it which impressed the beholder with the idea that he was in the presence of no ordinary man. Men called him the savior of Canada, for he had been sent at a most critical moment to retrieve, if possible, the blunders, the incapacity of his predecessor, Denouville. Crafty, supple, acute, he was the very man to

comprehend Indian diplomacy, to penetrate or baffle Indian duplicity, or by a politic act to disarm the hostility of these wily adversaries. At the same time, he not only knew when and where to strike the most deadly blows, but how to draw from success in war the most important, the most fruitful results. The Iroquois, who waged incessant and destructive warfare against Canada, called him the great Onontio. He had not disdained to join an Indian war-dance, in which he was the first to strike the war-post with his hatchet. He harangued his savage allies in their own sententious and highly imaginative rhetoric, imitated their own methods of war, and even their atrocities in roasting prisoners alive—to the end, perhaps, that the Indians might admire in him the qualities which they most valued in themselves.

With the sagacity to comprehend and the ability to deal with foes in arms, white or red, Frontenac combined the excellent system of carrying the war into the enemy's country. He had almost blotted out the remote English settlements on the exposed New England sea-coast; he had repulsed the ambitious attempt of New England to crush him in his own stronghold of Quebec. The government of New York, staggered and dismayed by the terrible tragedy of Schenectady, made a useless and inglorious demonstration against Montreal, which utterly failed of its purpose. Acadia had been reconquered without a blow, and now the fiery old veteran, having fully vindicated the confidence of his king, might take a long and deep breath in the security won for himself and for Canada, at such a heavy cost to his enemies of blood, treasure, and military prestige.

Nevertheless *this strong* mind had *its weaknesses. The* man who was cool, sagacious, and far-sighted in the presence of great dangers or great affairs, seemed to utterly lose his head when confronted with the petty cabals by which he was surrounded. Here the great man became exceedingly little. His quarrels with the royal intendants, with the Jesuits, were the fruitful source of greater difficulties, the cause of perpetual scandal, and often of harsh reproof and warning from Versailles. The unwise division of administrative functions between the governor-general and the intendant irritated, exasperated Frontenac to such a degree that only the stern command of Louis preserved outward peace between them. To-day it was a question of precedence at the Council, or at some civic or religious ceremony; tomorrow some trifling question of trade brought them to the verge of open rupture.

With the all-powerful Society of Jesus Frontenac's relations were equally critical; nor did he give himself the trouble to imitate the subtle and dexterous policy of the Order in its attempts to traverse his plans or undermine his influence, with one of equal duplicity and address. Add to this, Frontenac was vain, fond of pomp, jealous that the deference due to his rank and station should be paid with all the forms of courtly etiquette. He would have a little Paris, or at least a little Versailles, at Quebec, in which he, Frontenac, should reign without a rival.

For the moment the count's military successes had humbled his enemies within as well as without his government, so that he triumphed in a double sense. He had been asked to perform a miracle, and had compassed one. His arrogant and haughty spirit, his ambition to rule alone, were at length satisfied; the conclave of conspirator

baffled and confounded. The brusque old governor-general stood once more in the full blaze of royal favor.

The count had just come from a sitting of the Supreme Council. He seated himself in an antique fauteuil behind the table, facing the spot where Nelson stood. A person in the garb of a Franciscan followed the governor into the room, and remained standing at a respectful distance. Frontenac appeared to be examining some despatches before him; but while cutting the seals, Nelson surprised a quick and penetrating glance shot at himself from beneath the pair of grizzled eyebrows. With all his *sang froid*, the prisoner could not help feeling uneasy under this investigating eye: he was glad when the governor, seeming for the first time aware of his presence, leaned back in his chair and looked him squarely in the face. Having scanned the young man closely for a few seconds, he took up a paper, glanced rapidly at its contents, and turning to the silent individual, demanded if this was the person named in the despatch he held in his hand.

"Yes, your excellency," replied the ecclesiastic, with an inclination.

"And whom M. de Villebon tells us is a most inveterate enemy of Canada?"

"The same, your excellency."

Nelson took a step toward the table, and said, in good French, "I ought to notify your excellency that I understand the language you are speaking perfectly well."

"H'm!" muttered Frontenac, "he is at least a man of honor;" then elevating his voice, "so much the better: we may then talk at our ease. This paper," resumed the governor, after a moment's pause, "describes you as John Nelson, of Boston."

Nelson acknowledged his identity *by a bow.*

"You have been in Quebec before?"

"Yes, your excellency."

"More than once?"

"Twice, M. le Compte."

"With what object?"

"Once to negotiate the release of some captives; once for my own proper account."

"Without doubt you have acquaintances in the city?"

"Perhaps. I cannot say yes or no."

"Why did the governor of Boston send you to Acadia?"

"Because of my knowledge of the country."

"Speak to the question. What end was that knowledge to subserve?"

"The interests of those who sent me."

"What interests?"

"Your excellency will excuse my answering."

"Eh! you will not answer?"

"No."

"How if I have the means to compel you to speak?"

Nelson's lip curled. "You have not the means," he answered, quietly.

"*Nous verrons.* Your occupation?" demanded the count, continuing his interrogation.

"I am a merchant."

"A merchant who leads a revolution?" pursued Frontenac, with a touch of irony; "we have heard of you, sir."

Not knowing what to reply, the young man contented himself with guarding a prudent silence. The count continued, with considerable vivacity, "A most disloyal, a most unrighteous act, sir, to dethrone your legitimate sovereign. But you Bostonnais are of the old parliamentary leaven, and account the divine right of princes a thing of little value. *Ma foi!* it must be confessed your Cromwell knew that royal heads should never be touched except with the axe; while this Wil-

liam of Nassau"—here Frontenac elevated his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders expressively—"comes like a thief in the night and robs his father-in-law of his crown."

"I beg your excellency's pardon," rejoined Nelson. "King William did not steal the crown: he received it from the nobles and commons of England."

"A nice distinction, truly! Is not the receiver as bad as the thief?"

"By your excellency's leave," said Nelson, a little nettled, "Englishmen hold it neither theft nor sacrilege: and when a great nation resolves to defend the title it has given—"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the governor, "the multitude of offenders is their safeguard. But how should noble and chivalric sentiments be expected where there is no noblesse to maintain the sound principles of the throne. Faugh! one might as well look for attar-of-roses in a dunghill!"

"M. le Compte," retorted Nelson, pointing to the scalp before him, "that is a school of chivalry in which Englishmen do not wish to learn."

Frontenac bit his lip, but quickly replied, with affected unconcern, "What would you? We are not beating each other with feathers: the Iroquois, your allies, spare neither women nor children."

"But no Englishman leads them, no English priest exhorts them to slaughter the hapless and unoffending as a deed pleasing in the sight of Heaven," said Nelson, forgetting the discretion he so recently recommended.

"You know very well," replied Frontenac, without betraying outward resentment, "that neither French nor English can restrain a savage within the bounds of civilized war. To him an enemy *dead is an enemy* the less. *That is Indian logic.* You put the war-hatchet in the hands of an Iroquois; we, a gun into those of an Abenaqui or a Huron. *Voilà tout.*"

"There is, however, a way to avert these calamities," said Nelson, his face lighting up with the thought in his mind.

"Go on; speak frankly."

"Neutrality for the colonies, French and English. Why should we, who cannot influence the result, wage cruel and destructive war, the one against the other?"

Frontenac's face betrayed the astonishment he felt at so unexpected a proposal. "The devil!" thought he; "that is an idea. I must have an eye on this fellow!" Then addressing Nelson once more, he said, without a trace of the bantering manner he had hitherto discovered,

"My word of honor, chevalier, the suggestion does you credit. It is humane: it is generous: it is even chivalrous, though, I fear, a little visionary." He continued, between curiosity to develop and desire to restrain the discussion of so delicate a question, "But I presume you have no authority to make such a proposition?"

"None."

"Let us speak no more of it, then," said Frontenac, a little dryly. "You have strongly interested me, but the scheme is impracticable."

"If your excellency will pardon my pertinacity, might I ask why?"

"I cannot explain myself further at present, and you must recollect you are not speaking for the governor of Boston, but for yourself."

"True; but if you will allow me to return to Boston on my parole of honor, I engage to bring back the consent of Governor Bradstreet and the powers which your excellency demands."

"If I let you make shipwreck of my plans and those of my master, my young

Don Quixote! if I permit your stumbling-block of neutrality to stop the way I have sweat blood to open! If I do—" thought Frontenac. There was nothing, however, in that inscrutable face to enlighten the most accomplished physiognomist. The countenances of the two men were, in fact, a study: Nelson's so open, ingenuous, honest, all light and shade, keeping touch and time with his thoughts, not yet perverted from its purpose of illustrating those thoughts; Frontenac's a living mask, disciplined to conceal what was passing in his mind, and keeping its owner perpetually on guard lest nature should betray him—a face like that of a puppet, having eyes, lips, and even muscles moved by the hidden wires and secret springs of his will.

"Well," said Frontenac at last, "I shall reflect on the matter. You do right in speaking thus freely, for believe me, I appreciate frankness like yours above everything. Enough of state affairs; it grows late."

Nelson judged the moment opportune to ask the count's intentions concerning himself. The latter replied that for the present he should be compelled to detain him a prisoner of war.

"But, your excellency," objected Nelson, "I am a private gentleman, a non-combatant. You will admit me to ransom?"

"You were taken while serving in a public capacity."

"I do not deny it; but M. le Compte will do me the justice to observe that I filled a civil mission, and that my functions were wholly pacific."

"A messenger of peace, waving the olive-branch, and scattering benedictions right and left!"

"If your excellency likes to put it thus, yes," said Nelson, smiling.

"*It was doubtless in the interests of peace that when you* met M. de Saint Castin in your route, you knocked some twenty of his Abenaquis in the head. No, my dear chevalier, I am persuaded that, with the most pacific intentions in the world, your instincts are frightfully warlike. Besides," pursued the count, with his perpetual irony, "if I were to send you back to Boston, you might be badly received for disobeying your instructions, which you tell me were to treat, and not fight."

"Your excellency cannot be serious. Since you are so well-informed, it is unnecessary to observe that we simply defended ourselves from the attack which Saint Castin forced upon us."

"Diable! yes; and to good purpose, it seems. But to finish, I have other views concerning you. At the same time, I am not ignorant of the kindness you have shown to our poor French prisoners, and I am going to give you the proof that Frontenac knows how to requite a generous enemy. You will take up your lodging in the château, with no other restriction than to confine yourself to the city of Quebec. Have I your word not to attempt to pass beyond?"

"You have, M. le Compte," replied Nelson.

"Very good," said the governor, striking a bell. The lieutenant of the guard appeared at the door. "M. de Carteret, conduct the Chevalier Nelson to his apartment. I recommend him to your particular care. And now, monsieur," to Nelson, "let us see you, after the vesper bell, in the salle-à-manger. *Au revoir, monsieur, au revoir.*"

"And you, Bonfant," resumed Frontenac, when the door shut behind Nelson, "put yourself upon the traces of this man whenever he goes abroad. Insinuate yourself into his confidence, watch his movements, his acts. *Pardieu!* surprise his secret thoughts if

you can. One must not let generosity run away with his discretion; it is the maxim of statesmen and, above all, the aphorism of common-sense. Go!"

CHAPTER XIV.

QUEBEC IN WINTER.

Nelson had been told that he and the other English prisoners would only be admitted to exchange upon the return of the garrison of Port Royal, whose detention was regarded at Quebec as a flagrant violation of the terms of surrender. Upon this point Frontenac was inflexible. The river being already frozen, water communication with the sea-coast was at an end for the next six months. The long, painful, and dangerous journey across a howling wilderness, Nelson knew, would hardly be undertaken for the release of a few prisoners. He therefore submitted, with as good grace as possible, to the alternative of passing the winter in Quebec.

For some weeks the prodigious quantity of snow, continually falling, proved an effectual bar to the privilege accorded him by the governor-general. Even he, as Nelson could see from the window of his chamber, even Frontenac and the gentlemen of his suite were compelled during Advent to get over the little distance which separated the château from the Recollet church on snow-shoes. Nelson was therefore obliged to content himself with such employments or recreations as could be found within the limits of the château. In this respect the entire population of Quebec might be said to be equally prisoners with himself. Except on occasions of urgency, few stirred out-of-doors. The greater part of the shops were *shut up, since* there was no *business to be transacted;* and if there had been any, the narrow thoroughfares were choked up and impassable. In these straits every householder, according to his condition and purse, victualled his dwelling to withstand a siege of snow and a blockade of ice. Meat, poultry, and game, solidly frozen, sausages, hams, and neats' tongues, salads and vegetables, were packed away in the cellars for the subsistence of the besieged, so to speak, who ate and drank, slept and woke again to devoutly cross themselves before cursing the weather, or exclaim, as they had already done a thousand times, "*Mon Dieu!* how it snows!"

Now this prolonged combat with King Frost, to which the city seemed, sooner or later, doomed to succumb, had its tragic as well as its comic side. The deadly weariness of the days, the insupportable *ennui* of the long nights, were depressing enough, but the silence and solitude which reigned in the streets were absolutely painful. The churches were deserted, for there were neither baptisms to celebrate, marriages to solemnize, nor penitents to confess. Thus the clergy, the lovers, and the sinners were equally in despair. Seldom, indeed, was the stillness broken by the solemn tolling of a bell, for the dead lay unburied and unshriven in the houses where they had breathed their last. Nothing could be more sad or more death-like than the city, without movement, and almost without a sound, to proclaim it the habitation of the living. Flake by flake, inch by inch, the white banks rose higher and higher, until, on the first interval of fine weather, Quebec looked like a city recently buried, and only half exhumed from beneath an eruption of the frozen heavens.

Movement became practicable when the snow hardened sufficiently to bear the weight of men and beasts of bur

den. Then, like burrowing animals from their holes, the inhabitants came forth from their dwellings and dug their way to the top of the huge ramparts before them. Communication between the upper and lower town was re-established. Sledges began to cross the St. Lawrence on the ice, carioles to glide through the streets, the cheerful bells and sharp cries of the drivers to resound on the frosty air. Neighbor greeted neighbor. The usual stream of soldiers, friars, and bourgeois from the city, of Hurons from Lorette, of *habitants* from the côtes, flowed through the streets once again.

Apart from the constraint of his sedentary life, Nelson had little reason to complain of a captivity which his captor's made as little rigorous as possible. He was forbidden to communicate with his fellow-prisoners, a hardship which he felt keenly, but to which he was forced to resign himself. On the other hand, the officers who surrounded the governor with a sort of military court, finding Nelson a good companion, invited him to join their mess, their card-parties, or partake of the *petits-soupers* with which they enlivened the dull routine of garrison life. He was received in the houses of the principal merchants as one of themselves; and even M. de Champigny, the royal intendant, delighted with Nelson's intimate knowledge of the needs and resources of the country, tendered him the hospitalities of his palace and table. Thus far his situation was tolerable enough. But there came a time when the young man ceased to prize the indulgence of Frontenac. Whenever he stirred abroad he was sure to be shadowed by the eternal Franciscan, who on one or another pretext joined him in his walks, and would not leave *him for a moment. A man of Nelson's perceptions* was not long at a loss to account for the true motive, or to fix the true character of his self-constituted attendant.

There was but one way to get rid of this surveillance. Nelson shut himself up in his apartment, and refused to leave the château.

CHAPTER XV.

A DÉJEÛNER AT THE CHÂTEAU.

"You can lead a horse to water, but cannot make him drink."—Old Saw.

One morning, as Nelson descended the staircase on his way to the refectory, he met one of the governor's guards coming up. The soldier carried his right hand to his head, while with the left he extended a folded paper. Nelson opened and read. It was a summons to attend the governor without delay. Instead, therefore, of continuing his route in the direction of the refectory, the young man turned into the corridor leading to the apartment into which we have already introduced the reader. Arrived here, he showed the count's order to the sentinel, who threw open the door and announced, "*M. le Chevalier Anglais!*"

"*Faites entrer*," replied the deep bass of the governor-general.

The count was dressed in a sort of military negligé, which however could not and did not conceal that distinction of manner belonging only to the habitual associates of the great. He rose on the entrance of his guest, whom he greeted with the grace and *bonhomie* none knew better how to assume when the occasion demanded.

"You are prompt, sir, in paying me the visit I but now requested," said Frontenac, graciously.

"I have only this moment received your excellency's invitation, and have hastened to know his commands," re-

plied Nelson, astonished at seeing the count at work at so early an hour.

As if replying to the young man's thoughts, the count observed, while affixing his seal to the last of a heap of letters, "We who watch over the interests of a great nation must work early and late in order that they may not suffer in our hands. Apropos, have you breakfasted, chevalier!"

Nelson replied in the negative.

"Then, as our conversation may be somewhat long, I beg you will do me the honor to take a cup of chocolate and a morsel of bread with me."

Nelson comprehended that this was the kind of invitation one does not refuse; he therefore signified his acceptance by a profound bow, buttoned himself up, morally, and remained on the alert.

The count's bell brought his *maitrè d'hotel*, napkin in hand, to the door. This functionary announced that the breakfast of M. le Gouverneur was served.

"Very well, Duprez," said Frontenac; "lay another cover, uncork another bottle of white wine, and, above all, make haste, for we are dying of hunger."

As the steward hastily withdrew to execute his master's orders, Frontenac took Nelson's arm, glanced at the table to convince himself that his papers were safe from any prying eye, and then, like friends of long standing, the governor and his prisoner passed out of the room into the *salle à manger*.

With a brief "To table, sir," Frontenac seated himself at the board, pointed Nelson to a chair opposite his own, and dismissed the attendant with a gesture which that discreet official rightly construed to mean, "I am going to breakfast *tête-à-tête* with this gentleman: you may *go, Duprez.*"

Though not so meagre as the count had just said, the repast was sufficiently frugal. There was a fine pickerel, or *poisson dorée*, with herbs, an omelet *au rhum*, besides the remains of a pasty which had already sustained some pretty formidable inroads at yesterday's dinner.

The count filled his own glass, and, seeing that his guest did the same, politely said, "To your good appetite, monsieur."

Nelson merely touched his lips to the wine, waiting always for his host to develop his intentions. After some minutes devoted to the viands, and to the exchange of a few civil commonplaces, the governor wiped his gray mustache, and imparting to his features an expression of benevolent concern, demanded of Nelson if he found aught to complain of in his captivity.

"On the contrary, M. le Compte," replied our Bostonian, "I have to thank you for the care you have taken to make me forget it."

"But in fact you do find it somewhat wearisome; is it not so?"

"Really, your excellency, the unexpected issue of my mission, which, instead of terminating at Quebec, ought to have finished at Port Royal, cannot but seriously derange my affairs, and must have caused no little inquietude to my friends. However, as my situation is inevitable, I resign myself to these mischances, *bon grê, mal grê*—the easier, indeed, since your excellency's courtesy has lightened the burden so much more than I had either right or reason to expect."

"You are then, on the whole, satisfied with me?" pursued Frontenac, with a still more gracious smile.

"Satisfied, M. le Compte! Say that I am charmed with the delicacy of which your excellency gives me so many proofs."

"He is, after all, an honest fellow,"

thought Frontenac, "and my suspicions have been unfounded. Bah! let us try again."

"*Allons donc!*" said the governor, with an openness of manner calculated to disarm suspicion itself — "*allons donc!* my dear chevalier, why do you then make yourself a prisoner from choice, since you are not one of necessity?"

"Oho!" thought Nelson, "we are in the fire, as the count would say. For no better reason," he replied, "than, having satisfied my curiosity in running about the city, and got the better of those attacks of chagrin which your excellency can easily comprehend were, at first, disagreeable enough, I no longer feel the impulse to run away, at least from myself," he added with a smile. "For the rest, I assure you that I am quite at my ease in the château."

"But you will make yourself ill if you persist in this sedentary resolution, and that would cause me unbounded chagrin, my dear sir," said Frontenac, half convinced.

"Let me reassure your excellency upon that point. I have an excellent constitution, and enjoy, thank God, perfect health. But if your excellency insists that I should go out—"

"It matters not; that is your affair; do as you like. Nevertheless, I advise you—"

"Oh, M. le Compte," eagerly exclaimed Nelson, "if I had any idea that your excellency had a wish, a thought even, on the subject—"

"I advise you," repeated the governor, finishing the sentence Nelson had interrupted, "not as your jailer, but as your physician."

"A thousand thanks! Will your excellency grant me a favor?"

"Ask it."

"*To lend me one of his guards for a guide and, at need, for a protector.*"

"*Hein!*" said Frontenac to himself, "it appears that Bonfant displeases him. A soldier for a priest! well, 'tis an exchange:" then, speaking aloud, "But you who know Quebec perfectly have no need of a guide, and under my eyes no one will dare to offer you the least insult."

"Your excellency is right; I will go unattended. We shall see," he thought, "under what pretext you will impose a spy upon me hereafter." Frontenac emptied his glass, without feeling sure that he had not fallen into a snare.

"They tell me," resumed the governor, after an interval in the conversation, "that you know Acadia like a native."

Nelson replied affirmatively.

"And that your family had certain interests there."

"And still have, M. le Compte."

"In fact, I remember to have heard something of it from the intendant. Ah, I have it!" continued the governor, as if questioning his memory; "was it not your uncle, Colonel Temple, who claimed the seigniory of Acadia, and who was dispossessed by the treaty of Breda?"

"Your excellency is correctly informed."

"And who, finding his instances to the King of Great Britain for redress unavailing, meditated, and in fact took some steps toward becoming a French subject?"

"The same."

"But there was an indemnity, was there not, and, after certain delay, which your relative found vexatious enough, it was paid?"

"Not a farthing," said Nelson, frowning slightly.

"You astonish me!" continued Frontenac, who, however, knew the history from beginning to end. "It is an in-

famy, a national dishonor, thus to break the solemn obligation of a treaty."

"Say that it is the genius of the House of Stuart to repudiate its sacred engagements," suggested Nelson, with some bitterness.

"Bah!" said Frontenac, "there is little to choose, believe me, between one prince and another in that regard —always excepting my own august sovereign, the most noble gentleman as well as the greatest prince in Christendom," he quickly added.

Nelson pinched his lips to repress a smile. Frontenac, pursuing his idea, went on: "So that you have, I suppose, little expectation of recovering your indemnity?"

"Little enough, unless His Majesty King William lends a favorable ear to our prayer."

"Do not deceive yourself, but look the situation in the face. Think you, with the charges of his expedition, gratuities to his accomplices — your pardon, I mean his partisans—the costs of a war with France — think you, I say, he will listen, or, if he does listen, that the treasury of England is, like the mines of Peru, inexhaustible?"

"We are used to disappointment, and, after all, it would be only one more failure to add to the list," answered Nelson, with a sigh.

"*Dieu me damne!* as you English have it, do you know what I would do if I were in your place?"

"I cannot guess; but your excellency will doubtless tell me."

"Do what your ancestor was so near doing—receive from the magnanimity of France what the injustice of my native country defrauded me of."

"Renounce my country! forswear my title to the name of Englishman!" exclaimed Nelson, laying down his knife and *fork, and staring at the speaker with eyes wide open.*

"Eh! *pardieu!* and why not, if your country renounces you?" said Frontenac, as if he had suggested the most natural thing in the world.

Startled by the blunt emphasis with which it was made, thrown off his guard by its unexpectedness, Nelson did not attempt to hide the astonishment, almost indignation, he felt at the proposal that had just fallen from Frontenac's mouth; but doubting if the governor had yet fully discovered his purpose, he determined not to balk the disclosure by a premature display of passion. Resuming his command of himself, he remarked, with a deprecatory shake of the head, "But I have no claim on the crown of France, nor interest to bring my suit, if I had one, even so far as the first minister's closet."

"Tell me," said Frontenac, suddenly changing the subject, and looking attentively at his guest, "how it happens that under the new régime a man like you is passed by in the general distribution of rewards, while a low fellow, an adventurer, like this Fibs, is loaded with favors?"

Nelson reddened slightly. The count believed he had at last found the weak spot in the harness.

"M. le Compte," said the young man, with admirable reserve, "is too good to take so much interest in one so obscure as myself. Where there is no expectation of reward there can be no disappointment. I have nothing to complain of: a private station is, in fact, my choice."

"I do not hesitate to declare to you, chevalier, that my interest in you and your affairs compels me to push my interrogatories still further: always understood," added the count, with his eternal smile, "that you are not constrained to answer unless it suits you."

Nelson acknowledged this permission by a movement of the head.

"You are not a Puritan, monsieur?"

"No; I belong to the Church of England."

"Married or single?"

"A bachelor," replied Nelson, with heightened color.

"H'm!" thought Frontenac, "a bachelor with expectations." He however said, "All that falls out marvellously. Your affairs at Boston might, without doubt, be arranged through an agent, provided you did not return there?"

"Provided I did not return!" echoed Nelson; "what means your excellency?"

"Patience, monsieur, and you will see presently."

Nelson composed himself as well as he was able, considering the confusion of his ideas.

"Listen!" said Frontenac. "Acadia you regard as of right belonging to your family; is it not so?" Nelson nodded. "*Eh bien!* during thirty-odd years you or your uncle, or, to preserve the order of chronology, your uncle or yourself, have vainly reclaimed your rights therein. Now, Acadia, entirely French as it is in language, religion, and attachment for the *fleur-de-lis*, is otherwise allied by its commerce, its fisheries, and even by a certain sentiment of fear, to its nearest, its more powerful neighbor; and that neighbor, as you know, is New England." The count paused. Nelson again made an assenting gesture. "You English of Boston," continued the governor, "gain much money in contraband trade with this province, while his majesty's revenues lose as much. I know very well that the French governors of Acadia find their advantage in shutting their eyes to this illicit commerce with you; that is understood without saying; but it is necessary that I, who have the *king's honor at heart* and his rights to *protect, should put* an end to so great an evil and so mortifying a scandal. Beyond this are certain political considerations of high importance, which a man of your perceptions, my dear chevalier, cannot fail to appreciate at their true value. In a word, it is indispensable to discover and frustrate the political designs of these English with respect to Acadia, and at the same time defeat the *rapprochement* which threatens to have such serious results for us. You see I speak plainly, for I am convinced I speak to a man of honor. Now I, as Governor-general of all Canada, have some interest with his majesty the king, and more influence with the first minister, who is my relation. You credit that, I suppose, sir?" said the count, stopping to take breath.

"I have the fullest faith in what your excellency tells me, but—"

"Very good; attend closely to what I am going to add to that. For some time I have been seeking a suitable person to turn back the revenues that are now flowing from the king's coffers, re-establish the ancient boundaries of Acadia as far as the Kenebeki, repulse the English attempts to overrun its territory, with the strong hand. Certes, the search has been long, but at last I have found the man."

"And might one ask, without indiscretion, who is this man?"

"It is you, chevalier."

"I!"

"Yourself. *Sangdieu!* why not? You are brave; you speak French with a purity of accent which surprises me; you know the plans, the resources of my enemies; and you understand the secret means by which my Acadians are being, little by little, corrupted. I, monsieur, see that you have suffered much; that you have been shamefully treated by those whining Puritans yonder. Forgive me for speaking my mind thus plainly of your compatriots,

it is my interest for you carries me away. Why, then, should a man of spirit, as I know you to be, have a single wish to return among them? You have no wife or children pulling at your heart-strings. You are not a simpleton. Do you believe that your situation would be more tolerable, now that your mission has failed? Bah! you do not believe it," said the count, with a shrug, summarily disposing of a supposition so ridiculous by washing it down with a brimming glass of wine.

Nelson sat with folded arms, watching his slightest movement, as if he strongly suspected the governor had gone mad. He opened his mouth as if to check the torrent of words, at least while he might collect his ideas for the *dénouement* he saw coming; but Frontenac, with a deprecating gesture, exclaimed,

"I pray you listen to the end; we shall be there in a moment. If, now, his majesty, at my intercession, were to give you a broad domain in Acadia, you would defend it, would you not? And if he accompanied the act of donation with a commission as governor, as your worthy uncle, Sir Thomas, was before you, you would not be again despoiled, I engage, without some sword-thrusts being exchanged. We will presently talk over the plan of campaign together, and at the favorable moment you will go to your government with enough of my tried soldiers to guarantee your title against all comers. And now, sir," continued Frontenac, after a rapid mental examination assured him that he had forgotten nothing likely to aid his object, "your answer."

While the count was speaking, the blood mounted by degrees to the tips of Nelson's ears. His eyes sparkled, his breast heaved as the tempter with steady voice and unmoved countenance *developed his proposal.* And this proposal, pure and simple, was that Nelson should betray his country, as Judas betrayed his Master, for a price. His first impulse was to throw himself upon the count and strangle him where he sat; but fortunately this rash incitement passed as quickly as it came, leaving, however, the desire to twist the governor's neck as strong within him as ever. Restraining himself by a violent effort, he said coldly, and as a man who weighs every word,

"M. le Compte, you have mistaken your man."

The words were spoken with an emphasis and sincerity that made it impossible for the count not to perceive that they came from the heart. For the rest, not a movement of a muscle or the slightest change of color had escaped him. But Frontenac was too little accustomed to defeat to abandon the field because his first attempts had met with a repulse. The cunning old diplomat knew that a first refusal, whether in love, war, or diplomacy, was often the prelude to unconditional surrender. Moreover, his *amour propre* was now involved. "Let us try again," he said to himself. "*Diantre!* there is no fortress so impregnable that a mule laden with gold may not enter."

"You have well understood my meaning, chevalier?"

"M. le Compte has explained himself too clearly for me to pretend to misunderstand."

"Weighty reasons urge you, Monsieur Nelson."

"Say golden reasons, M. le Compte, and you hit the mark."

"As you please," said the count, smiling at the retort, but sticking pertinaciously to his idea. "We who have so often felt the want of a few louis to jingle against each other know how many things gold will do. Think well of it, monsieur; you will be the richest

seignior in New France—the envy of all my gentlemen, not excepting that *gaillard* Saint Castin."

"Speak no more of it, I entreat your excellency," said Nelson, more and more pained at this perseverance.

"*Peste!* this man values himself highly. He is not avaricious, it seems. Let us try what pride and vanity will do," reflected Frontenac.

"Your refusal does not astonish me, monsieur. Credit me when I say that I have sufficient knowledge of men to foresee that such things as lands and pensions would fail to influence a man of gentle blood like you. But suppose, again, his Christian Majesty were to embellish your seigniory with a brevet of count—behold yourself a grand seignior! *Par exemple!* our Canadian noblesse would split with envy. Come, what say you to that? After all, it is you who would confer honor on the title."

Frontenac played his last card, and Nelson's endurance reached its utmost limit. Anger, shame, and sorrow all struggled for utterance. "Can there be," he thought—"can there be anything in my face that could lead this man so to misjudge me—anything in my acts that would justify this insult?" He could remember nothing. Turning to the count a countenance on which the Almighty had stamped his own patent of nobility, he said, without bombast or affectation,

"I have but one reply to make, M. le Compte; here it is: It is not a question of honor, but of dishonor, your excellency persists in submitting to a most unwilling listener. Until to-day I have lived an honorable life, respected and self-respecting. You have not the means to make me give the lie to that life—no, not if you were to offer me the baton of Constable of France. If I have been shamed at listening to you, sir, what should I feel at accepting your seductive proposals? You find me your prisoner, you find me unhappy, for I avow that I am so; you find that I have suffered wrongs at the hands of my countrymen. Be it so; is it generous, is it noble, is it even just, thus to tempt my conscience and my honor? The King of France owes me only three things—a pallet, a crust of bread, and a cup of water. I demand them of you, Monsieur le Compte; for, on my soul, I had rather endure a year's physical hardship than undergo the moral suffering of the last half hour."

"Reflect, sir," said Frontenac, whose dark face grew purple and his lips white.

"Renounce my allegiance? betray my country? carry fire and sword to the hearthstones of my countrymen? I tell you no! a thousand times no!" burst out Nelson, rising from the table and facing his tormentor like a wounded stag at bay.

The two men remained thus while one might count twenty, Frontenac drumming with his fingers on the table the while. At length he rose in his turn, took half a dozen steps toward the door, stopped, and, looking backward over his shoulder, said in a voice husky with suppressed passion,

"Very well, monsieur, it was for you to choose, and you have chosen. But mark this, and engrave it on your memory: A syllable of our interview, Monsieur Nelson, and you are a lost man! Frontenac keeps his word for good or evil. I recommend to you the utmost circumspection in this regard."

With this warning, and the look which Nelson encountered without flinching, Frontenac left the room with a heavy step.

Nelson pensively regained his chamber. Once there, he reflected on this

new and dangerous complication of his affairs; and while so doing he mechanically thrust his right hand within his waistcoat, where the fingers closed over a locket suspended exactly above the region of the heart. This time it was a sinister aid to memory. Had he not just resisted the temptation of ambition, as formerly he had resisted that of love? A moment of despondency succeeded his recent exaltation; a sense of exhaustion, physical and mental, testified to the obstinacy of his struggle with the governor. He flung himself heavily into a chair, and plunged gloomily into the difficult problem of his own life.

CHAPTER XVI.

MADOCKAWANDO.

Comes the spring, if we may so characterize a season which, in fact, is debilitated winter relaxing its death-grip from the throat of earth; comes the faint movement and flutter of returning animation; come the birds, the violets, the Canadian bateaux, the war-canoes; and with them Madockawando, chieftain of the Abenaquis.

This sachem, of whom we have already had a passing glimpse, was come to receive the thanks, the instructions, and, above all, the presents, of his white father, the governor-general. Inasmuch as his nation had performed prodigies of valor, he hoped that the white chief's generosity would know no limits. Having lost many of his braves, he expected the count would liberally bestow the gifts belonging to the defunct among the survivors; and for the five miserable English prisoners who graced his triumphal entry, he counted on receiving a recompense from Frontenac equal to their value in the open *market of Quebec.*

We have said that Frontenac loved display for its own sake; moreover, he knew its effect on these children of the wilderness. He appeared at the audience in his splendid uniform of lieutenant-general, the deep cuffs and broad facings literally crusted with gold-lace. He wore the cross of Saint Louis on his breast, his plumed hat on his head, and lying on the table before him was the elegant sword, presented, it was whispered, by the Montespan. He beamed, emitted rays, was resplendent. Behind his chair a dozen of his guards surveyed the scene; while the officers of his suite, powdered, perfumed, and laced, formed two glittering groups at his right and left, bewildering those simple savages by the richness of their apparel, the elegance of their arms, and the unparalleled coxcombry of a time when men fought about a shoulder-knot or discussed with discrimination the composition of a pomade. But underneath those embroidered mantles were some swords already celebrated in the annals of the colony.

Like so many great men before and since his time, the governor strongly appreciated the effect of a *coup de théâtre.* At the moment, therefore, when the Penobscot sagamore crossed the threshold, a salvo of artillery that sent the hearts of the savages into their mouths thundered from the ramparts.

The count loaded his red ally with compliments. He extolled his valor, lamented the loss of so many braves, whose manes he declared should be amply appeased; and he promised to make faithful report of Madockawando's achievements to the great father at Versailles, whose emblem was the sun, and whom his children delighted to call the Just. He then lighted a pipe, and after a few puffs passed it to the Abenaqui chieftain. Madockawan-

do smoked a few moments in silence, such being Indian etiquette, and then rose to reply.

Placing his left hand on his hip, and extending his right arm toward the governor, the chief began his harangue in these terms: "My father says well. Madockawando drinks his words, and is filled. Now the Abenaqui will speak. His hands are light and his heart heavy, but his Canada father will make his heart light and his hands heavy."

An emphatic grunt of approval greeted this diplomatic allusion to the expected presents. Impassible as a statue, grave as a Roman senator, the chief resumed:

"It is good. My young men pant to strike the Bostons, but their hatchets are dull, and all their powder is burned. My father will give them powder and hatchets?" Frontenac nodded. "It is good! Some of my young men's guns are broken—my father will give them new ones?" The count again nodded. "It is good!" again ejaculated the chief. "Father, six Abenaqui wigwams are empty; we have looked for the owners, but cannot find them; the cries of widows and orphans are in my ears; they say my Canada father will wipe away the blood-stains, and fill those lodges with beaver and wampum." Another pause, another assenting gesture, and another grunt of satisfaction. The politic savage went on: "Father, I honor you, but my soul is very sorrowful, and I am like a drunken man. My old men say the days of the Abenaquis are numbered: they say my white father leaves them to fight his enemies single-handed; they say the Bostons are many, they are strong, they are brave. Father, we cannot kill them all; we are afraid they will kill us. I do not speak a lie. My wise men say it is time to bury the hatchet, unless my Canada father helps us with all his might. I have spoken."

Madockawando seated himself on his mat. Every eye, by a common impulse, became fixed on the martial figure which rose to its full height, and seemed instinct with the pride of conscious power. The savages were more deeply attentive than before as Frontenac began:

"Let my brother be contented; he shall be satisfied. To-morrow he shall have his presents, and the next day the council-fire shall be lighted. My brother's words are weighty. They have sunk deep in my heart. Brother, tell your wise men Onontio will strike the English dogs alone." Here a murmur of applause ran through the circle of officers. "But," continued the count, "let my brother stop his ears, lest cunning words glide into them. Onontio's eyes are not shut; he is not asleep. Does not the chief know the great storms gather slowly? A great storm is gathering; it will break before many moons. My young men's feet are swift, their swords are sharp; they can find the English trail without help. Let the weary Abenaquis plant corn and spear the salmon; their Canada father will protect them from the Bostons. Onontio does not speak twice. I have done."

This speech finished the conference. With many ughs! the Indians drew their blankets around them and stalked away, with Madockawando at their head. An officer of the château conducted them to the cabaret "*Au Gros Castor*," where they were feasted and invited to spread their blankets.

The Abenaqui chief was little satisfied with his reception. He had plainly intimated that Frontenac was sacrificing his people, making them the cuirass to receive the blows of his enemy, while he himself kept safe and sound

behind its protection. And the pale chief had told him that the French could get along without the Abenaquis, if the Abenaquis thought they could get on without the French. Moreover, he had said it haughtily, disdainfully. It was his policy to humble the proud chief, and he had humbled him; but he had no idea of pushing matters too far. No. Madockawando was necessary to his plans. He would first rebuke and afterward conciliate him. But Madockawando had muttered fiercely to himself all the way from the upper to the lower town. There are certain animals it is never safe to chastise, which can never be tamed by correction. Madockawando snapped and showed his teeth now—a certain indication that he wanted to tear or bite something or somebody, and presently would, too, if opportunity offered.

But the sagamore's disgust reached its height on the following day. Regulated by the stinginess of the intendant, the presents were, if anything, more unsatisfactory than the governor's speech. The dead Abenaquis were not even considered by M. de Champigny in the distribution; and Frontenac, whether designedly or otherwise, had omitted the usual gratuities to the principal chiefs. There was no longer even the argument of personal advantage to counterbalance that of political interest; the subtle Madockawando already meditated deserting his traditional allies, now become so parsimonious, for his traditional enemies. In this mood he stumbled, to speak literally, on an old acquaintance.

This was no other than our friend Nelson, returning from a visit to a merchant in the lower town. While picking his way through the dark and dirty street *Sous le Fort*, he came violently in contact with a man who, obeying the impelling power of some unseen force, precipitated himself from the open door of a filthy cabaret. The collision produced recognition.

Nelson perceived that Madockawando was intoxicated. He was not now figuratively drunk, as he had said to Frontenac, he was drunk through and through—drunk physically, intellectually, morally—from the moccasins that uncertainly shuffled about in the mire, to the limp eagle's feathers fluttering on his scalp-lock—so completely under the influence of brandy, that he, the good brother and ally of Louis XIV., had just been thrust into the street for having drank when he had not a crown in his medicine-pouch, and by a mean *cabaretier!*

Nelson comprehended the situation at a glance, and by the aid of a few words Madockawando let fall in the Abenaqui tongue. Having propped the chief against the door-post while he paid his score and redeemed the tomahawk and knife which the landlord had forcibly taken in pledge, Nelson took his dusky companion's arm with intent to see him safely inside the *Gros Castor.*

The chief seemed faintly to comprehend that he had been disarmed, perhaps disgraced, for he chanted his death-song, grated his teeth, and foamed at the mouth by turns. In one of these paroxysms he snatched his axe from his belt, and before Nelson could guess his intention, suddenly turned and dashed off in the direction of the cabaret at a speed no one would have believed him capable of. Fortunately, Nelson overtook him before he had time to put his mad purpose in execution. He pacified the warrior as well as he was able, while leading, or rather dragging, him away from the object of his fury. In two minutes Madockawando had forgotten the episode, and could scarcely be prevented from stop-

ping every moment to load his companion with the most extravagant expressions of affection. Thrice Madockawando had called Frontenac a mean, stingy fellow, denounced the French as dogs, and called the English his brothers. "He is certainly very drunk," said Nelson to himself.

During the Indian's disgusting endearments, a word or two escaped his lips that arrested Nelson's attention. From that moment he became all ears. Instead of conducting the chief straight on to his lodgings, he trusted to the darkness of the night to make a *détour* which brought them back almost to the place of meeting. But Madockawando was too far gone to detect the ruse. His half-paralyzed tongue continued to betray him; and when Nelson at last reached the cabaret *Au Gros Castor*, he knew what he wished to know.

When they parted, Nelson had again to submit to being hugged by the chief, who clapped him heavily on the back, and with the look of a satyr invited some one to speak ill of his friend John, in order that he, Madockawando, might tear out the liar's tongue and make him eat it before his face. But as no one responded to the challenge, he stretched himself upon a heap of rushes, and was instantly buried in the deep sleep of intoxication.

Nelson made his way up the mountain, turning over and over again the chief's disjointed words. He knew that a great danger menaced New England, but what was its extent, and how to avert it? Perhaps another chapter may enlighten us as to the one and explain the other.

CHAPTER XVII.

NELSON'S THREE WANTS.

Since his memorable interview with Frontenac, Nelson began to feel the awkwardness of his situation more and more. He began to suspect that the count, having no longer any measures to keep with him, would seek an opportunity to entrap him in some underhand way—some way from which it would be impossible to extricate himself. He began to feel uneasy, too, at being the possessor — the unwilling possessor, it is true, but none the less possessor—of a portion of the count's confidence—a confidence which seemed dangerous enough, in the light in which he then stood. Added to this, he had become the depositary of Madockawando's secret, and being fully sensible that he was deservedly an object of suspicion, suspected everybody. For another man the secret might have proved too heavy, but Nelson felt the emergency demanded that he should bear the burden alone.

"Let us look at the gist of the matter," said the young man, during one of his frequent conversations with himself. "What is to prevent Frontenac from depriving me of my liberty? Absolutely nothing. He would only be in his right to put me under lock and key in the château; and that is, after all, what I should do were I in his place. He has no account to render of me, a prisoner. But to be shut up now—now, when I ought to be free —now, when I ought to be moving heaven and earth! The bare idea gives me the ague. I must be stirring. Yes, we are agreed there, John Nelson, but how? Tell me that, if you please, my worthy friend; for we must act, and that quickly too."

Every one knows that movement not only quickens the blood but gives vi-

tality to the ideas. In this persuasion the young man took the path leading to the summit of Cape Diamond. The direction was not chosen at hazard, like another, but with a twofold object. Nelson wanted to be alone, and the place was little frequented; he could observe everything that passed in the neighborhood of the château, could see the sentinel marching slowly up and down the bastion St. Ursula. Good! The sentinel could also see him, and his absence would create no mistrust.

The young man strode along the path, revolving in his mind the various projects that arose there. All at once he stopped. "I have it," said he to himself; "I must escape, and thus be the bearer of my own tidings. But I shall be pursued. Granted. And if recaptured—for, every precaution being taken, I must admit that contingency into my calculations—how is my warning to reach those for whom it is intended? Halt there a moment. My impulse is to give Frontenac the slip. I am sick unto death of this stagnation, of this suspense. By heaven, I have a great mind to try it! They might as well look for a needle in a haystack as for a solitary fugitive in that forest," thought Nelson, directing his eye at the long reaches of shaggy woods stretching away in the distance. But that glance revealed, also, the almost insurmountable obstacles to his plan; and those gloomy forests seemed an impenetrable barrier between the prisoner and the freedom he so longed for, and for which he was ready to risk his life. Nelson continued his soliloquy. "A hundred leagues and more of wilderness, without a guide, without arms, alone, in the hunting-grounds of hostile Indians! Bah! the idea is a clumsy one. No; I *must so manage* as to *turn aside suspicion from myself*; and, to make that doubly sure, must remain a prisoner *coûte qui coûte.*"

Nelson then resumed his walk. Arrived at the summit, he sat down on a stone which the workmen had placed in position on the verge of the precipice. "If I do not go myself," he reflected, "I must find a messenger; some one who can be gained over to our interest, or who has a powerful motive for making it his own. The thing is difficult, but the thing must be done. Let me see. The messenger must have a route, he must have money; therefore the sooner I set about finding the one and the other, the better for my purpose. Now for a council of war. Article One, the route. Question: shall we try the river? Opinion: escape by the river is next to hopeless. There is the long canoe voyage, to say nothing of the risk of being picked up by an enemy's cruiser or a pack of strolling savages. Supposing these dangers past, three months are necessary, not a day less, for a man who must lie hid by day and make his way by night only. Considered, and unanimously rejected. Pass to Article Two. The wilderness route—the Chaudière, the Kennebec, and the New England coast. Opinion: equally impracticable. If one might hope to traverse without detection this great thoroughfare of hostile tribes, such other enemies as starvation, wild beasts, and hardship are to be taken into account. To be sure, it is the shortest, but then it is also the most dangerous way. You must have two months. Negatived. Article Three, and last: Montreal, Lakes Champlain, Saint Sacrament, and Fort Orange. Agreed to without division."

"Now," continued the young man, crossing his right leg over the left and joining his hands at the knee, "that's settled. But, first of all, money must be had." Nelson mentally set forth in

pursuit of it. He ran over the merchants who had already cashed his bills for considerable sums; but to-day it was a question of one much larger than he had hitherto needed. Without doubt the first to whom he applied would instantly report the transaction to the governor-general; the governor-general would at once inquire what he expected to do with so much money; and he, Nelson, would have to undergo a searching cross-examination, perhaps abandon his project altogether. At this point Nelson struck his fist into his open palm, and his face brightened. "Why not go to the intendant?" suggested his mute but energetic mentor. To do so would be to avert suspicion; and, unless public rumor wronged him, M. de Champigny was not above turning an honest penny for his own as well as the king's account on occasion. Beyond question M. de Champigny would receive his explanations in good faith; and, in point of fact, who would dream of so audacious a scheme as that of borrowing money from the king's treasury to defeat the king's own plans. Without letting the grass grow under his feet, Nelson made his way straight to the palace of the intendant, which was one of the most picturesque and commodious public edifices the city could boast.

As he had foreseen, M. de Champigny received him graciously, while demanding to know what fortunate chance procured him the honor of this visit. Nelson knew that the intendant's time was precious; he therefore unfolded his business without hesitation.

"Two hundred pistoles! *Ma foi*, a fine sum! Might I ask, without being indiscreet, what you intend to do with *it?" demanded the rusé* official.

"*Your honor anticipates* my wishes. The greater part is for the ransom of two of my countrywomen, whose families are well known to me. The poor things are ready to die of grief and homesickness. You will do me this favor, sir?"

"You are a very charitable person, chevalier, and I should be enchanted to oblige you; but unfortunately the king's funds are not available for the purpose you mention."

Nelson's countenance fell. "But M. l'Intendant," he hastened to interpose, "I am willing to pay fifteen per cent. for the money."

The intendant shook his head, as if he should say, "You already have my answer."

"Twenty per cent.," ventured Nelson, who believed he knew his man.

The intendant pursed up his lips, shut his eyes, and scratched his nose reflectively with his goose-quill. Nelson immediately advanced the premium to twenty-five per cent.

"Monsieur," said Champigny, with a sigh, "do not press your demand. I repeat, the public moneys cannot be diverted from their legitimate uses. I do not suppose you have come to urge me to commit malversation?" he concluded, with a patronizing nod, which seemed to announce the impregnable character of the intendant's confidence in his own incorruptibility.

"Your honor wrongs me if he supposes otherwise," observed Nelson, turning as if to leave the bureau; "only it is unfortunate for the captives and for my promise to set them at liberty, not to be able to procure the money. To be sure," he added, with his hand on the latch, "I had expected to pay as high as thirty or even forty per cent., but since you cannot oblige me, I have only to say good-morning."

"*Ah ça*, then, if I understand, you

address yourself not to the intendant, but to M. de Champigny."

"That is precisely my intention."

"Here are pen, ink, and paper: draw up your bill of exchange."

Nelson complied, and having signed, handed the paper to Champigny.

"It is perfectly regular," said the latter. "When do you wish to touch your funds?"

"To-day—now, if that is agreeable."

Champigny went to a strong-box, unlocked it, and, taking out a bag, handed it to Nelson, saying, "Here are your two hundred pistoles."

Nelson dropped the bag into his capacious pocket, thanked his obliging banker, and went out. Before he crossed the threshold, Champigny laid his hand on his arm and said, negligently, "By-the-way, friend, it is unnecessary to mention our little transaction to the governor."

"Certainly, M. l'Intendant; above all, since you wish it," replied Nelson. "The very thing I would have asked had I dared," said he to himself.

"Fly, then, and redeem your lovely captives from the hands of the Philistines," said Champigny, in great good-humor.

Nelson went down the steps, thinking that the reciprocal distrust of the governor for the intendant and of Champigny for Frontenac had stood him in good stead.

In passing through the court-yard, he observed an unusual bustle going on: porters were bringing out of the cellars of the palace and from the adjoining storehouses boxes of bread, dried fish, potted meats, bales of cloth, and packages of trinkets, which they added to an already formidable heap of similar wares in the middle of the place. "I must know what is going forward here," *thought* our man.

"Hé, l'ami," *accosting* a laborer, who had just deposited his burden and stopped to take breath, "is M. l'Intendant going to strip the palace of provisions and merchandise by hazard?"

"Monsieur," replied the workman, "they are for the expedition."

"What expedition?"

"Monsieur is, then, ignorant that M. le Gouverneur is sending a convoy to Fort Frontenac?"

"Quite. And when will it set out?"

"The departure is fixed for the day after to-morrow."

"Thanks. Here is a crown for your information." Nelson then directed his steps rapidly toward the château.

In the Place d'Armes a sort of inspection of arms, equipments, and clothing seemed to be in progress—an infallible sign that some part of the garrison was under marching orders. But here Nelson feared to be too inquisitive. He, however, lingered in the court-yard of the château, keeping eyes and ears wide open.

"It is remarkable," he thought, after a rapid survey of the scene, "how sulky these fellows look and how taciturn they are; but one can well enough understand why they consider a year's sojourn in the midst of the savages equivalent to banishment." In fact, the effervescent gayety of the French soldier, especially when going to make a campaign, was wholly wanting. These had far more the appearance of convicts going to the galleys.

In taking a turn around the place, Nelson perceived that the military prison was empty, and all at once comprehended that the *mauvais sujets* of the garrison, those in disgrace for violations of discipline, had been released, in order that they, first of all, might take part in the contemplated expedition. In this arrangement he recognized the usual far-sightedness of Frontenac

Make it a question of life and death, and these good-for-nothings would fight with unequalled desperation; and if, unfortunately, broiled by the Iroquois, the governor would be spared the trouble of having them shot somewhat later.

"This is what I should call a general jail delivery," muttered Nelson. "There, now, are two fellows whispering together yonder, whom I should not care to meet in a dark night if alone. But, thanks to the same wise provision that makes the serpent hiss before it strikes, nature has branded 'beware' on those two villanously low foreheads. Good or bad, what are they to me? I have not found my third, my most pressing want; yet find it I must. Come, come, John Nelson, be alive. Seek! seek!"

The drum beat for the soldiers to fall in. As the two whom Nelson had remarked brushed by him, he caught the last words of their conversation.

"*Où donc?*"

"*Moulin à vent.*"

"*Quand?*"

"*Ce soir, neuf heures.*"

"*Convenu.*"

"So: a rendezvous! 'the windmill, this evening, nine o'clock,'" repeated Nelson. "I have half a mind to make one of the party; for if mischief is not hatching, never did two ugly countenances so belie their owners. Stay: what business is it of mine? Never mind, I have a genius for getting myself into trouble, and must not lose this chance."

A decision made was, for Nelson, next to an accomplished fact; he accordingly entered the château without debating the matter further with himself, and with a buoyant step.

As the afternoon wore away, he began to consider how he should leave *the château and return* to it unperceived. *The regulations* forbade any to pass in or out after dark, without the countersign or an order from the major of the château. Nelson possessed neither order nor countersign. Moreover, the attendant to whose special charge Nelson fell was required to convince himself of the prisoner's presence in the château; or, if absent, to report the fact to the officer of the guard, who in turn reported the delinquency to the major.

"My Cerberus visits me at nine o'clock. How unfortunate! I shall be late at the rendezvous," thought Nelson, with vexation.

Nelson waited until eight o'clock struck from the cathedral steeple. He then went out into the corridor, where the attendant, who, we ought to say, performed his duty with scrupulous fidelity, was already at his post. Nelson beckoned him to approach. Perceiving the signal, the official followed the young man into his chamber. "Rouillard," began the prisoner, "I have a wretched headache, and besides feel a little feverish to-night, for which reason I have eaten no supper."

"I had already remarked it," snapped Cerberus.

"So that I shall instantly go to bed," continued Nelson, whose forehead was creased with wrinkles.

"Shall I send monsieur the doctor?"

"By no means. I shall be better after a good night's rest," replied Nelson, divesting himself of his coat and waistcoat. "Be a good soul, and do not disturb me."

"You know my orders, monsieur. M. le Compte is a strict master."

"Yes, I know. Your orders are to convince yourself that I am in my chamber. Well, I am there, am I not? Do I counsel an infraction of those orders?"

"All very well; but you will remark

that my round is for nine o'clock, and it is now only a little past eight."

"Triple ass!" thought Nelson, "are you then really incorruptible?" Two or three crown pieces, slipped gently in his hand, seemed to operate a magical change in Rouillard's interpretation of his orders.

"Monsieur then suffers acutely?" he inquired, with tolerably counterfeited concern.

"As you see, Rouillard," replied the *malade imaginaire*, pressing his hands to his temples—"as you see, my friend."

"*Par exemple!* if I should lock you in your chamber, now, I do not say—"

"Do it, Rouillard; do it, I beseech you," said Nelson, stretching himself on the bed and pulling the coverlet up to his chin.

"Good-night, then," said Rouillard, turning the key in the lock. "I trust you will sleep off your headache."

"Good-night," repeated Nelson, in a languishing voice.

Does the reader find that Nelson had begun his apprenticeship in dissimulation? We answer that there is a homely New England proverb which says, "Fight the devil with fire." Furthermore, any different rule of action would infallibly have thwarted his design, and the reader doubtless perceives that he had one; while to remain passive would, in his eyes, have been a crime cowardly, debasing, unpardonable, the memory of which would have pursued him to the grave. Nelson possessed a conscience sufficiently tender, sufficiently scrupulous, as the reader knows; but the stake was too great, the consequences of inaction too overwhelming, for him to hesitate. Finally, we doubt if the most rigid moralist, the most accomplished splitter of ethical hairs, could have satisfied Nelson that his conscience, such as it was, *could or ought to slumber* peacefully, while its owner, in the presence of a catastrophe which he, and he alone, had the power to avert, refused to stretch forth his hand. Let us give Nelson the benefit of this doubt.

No sooner had the attendant's footsteps died away than Nelson flung off the clothes and jumped out of bed. He dressed himself with the utmost haste, drew on a pair of thick gauntlets, and put on his oldest hat, tying the broad brim with a black silk neckerchief under his chin. Thus disguised, he felt himself secure from recognition. Nelson then applied his ear to the key-hole and listened. Everything seemed quiet. He then proceeded to unlace the cord from his bed, which gave him a rope not far from twenty feet long, and sufficiently strong to bear his weight. This he knotted at intervals of two feet, making also a loop for every five feet of rope. Having finished his task, he again listened attentively at the door. "All's safe," he murmured; "now to get out of this man-trap!"

The young man cautiously opened the shutters of his window and looked out. It was pitch dark, and raining lightly. The court-yard of the château, which his window overlooked, was deserted, but a feeble glimmer shone from the *corps de garde*, and a few rays of ruddy light streamed from some lower window of the château. "So far well; no loiterers abroad to-night," he said in an undertone, satisfied with his inspection.

Nelson's apartment was in the second story. His window he estimated to be twenty-five feet from the ground. His plan was to descend by the ladder he had just completed, gain the rampart at an unguarded spot, and drop, by his hands, to the ground outside. There were two things to be considered. Should he be seen, he would be

fired at; secondly, he must leave his ladder dangling in the air; otherwise how would he get back to the château undiscovered? Nelson determined to take both risks.

He judged that he had still a quarter of an hour before him. Lifting a settle from the floor, he quickly made a running noose, and drew his cord tightly around the middle of the bench, which he placed across the embrasure. He then lightly swung himself out of the window and reached the last loop, from which his feet easily touched the ground. So far without accident. Crouching a moment to make sure no one had seen his descent, he crept stealthily along the wall of the château, and, favored by the darkness and rain, made a bold push for the ramparts. Fortunately, he crossed the open space to the southern wall unperceived. Nelson felt his way cautiously on until he came to a pile of lumber, which he knew to be situated about midway between the watch-towers. Again he listened. Hearing nothing, he became convinced that the sentinels had retreated into the turrets for shelter. He therefore boldly mounted to the summit of the wall, dropped lightly to the ground, and disappeared in the gloom.

The mill in which the two soldiers had given each other rendezvous was not more than a long musket-shot from the *enceinte* of the château. At present it was nearly in ruins; having so long ceased to grind, that even the rats, after devouring the last grain of wheat and the last kernel of corn, had been forced to desert it. Its situation, on the borders of the plain behind the city, was not merely lonely, but of such evil repute that the two soldiers felt little apprehension of being molested *by anything in mortal shape.* Nelson *approached the mill with* cautious steps. He had his theory about this clandestine meeting, at which he would scarcely have risked so much to be present, were he not urged on by a stronger motive than mere curiosity. However, he felt the imprudence of accosting two desperate men abruptly and unarmed. Surprise their secret, make it serve his purpose if it might, or, if not, leave the place as silently as he came, was his present purpose. But first to satisfy himself whether the mill was or was not tenanted.

He groped his way to the dilapidated porch which protected the entrance from the weather, listening intently, and heard, or thought he heard, the sound of voices within. Wind and rain beat heavily against the mill, but Nelson labored under too much excitement to feel that he was already wet to the skin. His doubt, however, soon passed into certainty; his men were there, but they conversed in tones scarcely above a whisper, so that the listener was able to catch only here and there a word. Emboldened by a sense of perfect security, they presently spoke louder, giving Nelson a clew to the conversation of the afternoon.

"But for to-night," said one, "we must abandon our plan."

"And why? now that we have taken so much trouble to get here," demanded the other.

"*Pardieu!* this is why: we shall be easily tracked in the mud, besides losing our way in this infernal darkness."

"Imbecile! by daybreak we shall have put five leagues between us and the château. Go back thou, if thy courage fail; ride the wooden horse, and take thy stripes like a whipped cur, if thou like; but for me, forward march! Do you hear?"

The discussion would doubtless have continued, had not Nelson interrupted it by taking a step or two in advance

and coughing slightly. The voices were hushed in an instant. He could see nothing, but could hear the ominous click of a musket being cocked. Suddenly a stern voice exclaimed, "*Qui va la?*"

"Hist! a friend."

"Another step, friend, and you are a dead man."

"Take care what you do: a shot will alarm the château."

"Take care thou, and speak when you are spoken to."

"We are betrayed; kill the accursed spy!" hissed a second voice.

"For God's sake, don't fire until you hear me; kill me afterward, if you will —I am alone and in your power—but first hear me!" said Nelson, hurriedly.

"Speak again at your peril! Halloo, it is the Englishman!"

The invisible speaker uttered this exclamation at the moment the sudden flash of a dark lantern fell on Nelson's features. The latter then plainly saw the dull gleam of a musket-barrel, the muzzle of which almost touched his breast. Nevertheless he stood firm, although the perspiration started on his forehead, and his heart beat somewhat faster than usual. After a moment's inspection, the soldier shut his lantern and said to his companion,

"Recover, thou; it is the Englishman."

All was dark as before. "Now, then," continued he who had challenged, "speak, and to the purpose too. What brings you here?"

"To see and speak with you."

"*Diable!* how knew you where to find us?"

Nelson narrated what the reader already knows, but what the soldiers were ignorant of.

"*Hé, bien!* you have surprised our secret; but *mark, we are not to be taken alive, like partridges* in a snare. In a word, why are you here? and what is our secret to you?"

"Everything. You are on the point of de—I mean of escaping. You are going among my friends; that is why I call myself yours."

"Ah! continue."

"You can help me: I am ready to reward your services according to their value." As there was no reply, Nelson proceeded. "At the risk of my neck I have escaped from the château. I understand you intend for Fort Orange. I would despatch letters of importance thither by a sure hand. These letters will be your credentials, and procure you recompense and employment by the Governor of New England. You are determined to achieve your freedom, aid me to obtain my own. Perhaps you have little cause to love your present masters."

"S— n— de D—!" hissed the deserters between their teeth.

"Well, then," resumed Nelson, "I have still less reason to love them. And, now you have my secret, what say you?"

"What do we say?" ejaculated the spokesman; "*pardieu!* if my comrade here is of my way of thinking, and you are not laying a trap for us—"

"A trap! What, come alone and unarmed, if I meant to betray, when a word in your captain's ear would have settled the business?"

"*Allons donc, c'est un galant homme,*" spoke a different voice, in a whisper.

"*D'accord,*" muttered the other, in the same tone.

The soldier raised the slide of his lantern and made a sign for Nelson to enter. Two or three loose planks served to barricade the door, and secure the trio against an intrusion which seemed less than ever to be feared, for the rain now fell in torrents. These

precautions taken, the soldiers quietly resumed their seats.

Nelson had perfectly recognized his men. Both had their muskets, and each had, besides, his *couteau de chasse* stuck in his belt. On the floor at their feet were a couple of haversacks containing their provision for the flight they were on the eve of beginning.

Nelson took up the word. Having satisfied their scruples, he easily resumed the ascendency to which he was of right entitled.

"Now listen to me. From to-night I take you into my service. How are you called?"

"Arnaud du Vignon."

"François Albert."

"Very well. Do you know me?"

"Certainly, we know the Chevalier Nelson," both answered.

"Here, Arnaud, is a pistole for you, and here another for you, François. If you obey my instructions to the letter, I promise each of you fifty like these on the day you set out, and as many on the delivery of my letters to the persons to whom they will be addressed."

The soldiers pocketed the money, and declared themselves ready to do the chevalier's bidding at every hazard.

"First of all, you must return to the château before you are missed."

The deserters looked at each other.

"It is indispensable. Your plan of escape is impracticable, or at least badly conceived. The sixty leagues between Quebec and Montreal will cost you a fortnight: so that the convoy will reach there before you; to such as you I say nothing of hardships and fatigue. To-morrow morning your flight will be known; the dogs and Indians put on your trail, which may be followed without difficulty, as you said just now, Arnaud."

"*Such is, in fact, my* opinion," said *that worthy.*

"That"—snapping his fingers—"for the dogs! and this"—slapping the stock of his gun—"for the Indians!" said his comrade, defiantly.

"More than that," continued Nelson, without heeding the interruption; "when Frontenac reaches Montreal he will have the country scoured for you; so you see that you will be caught between two fires. Dismiss the idea, François; the risk is too great."

"But, M. le Chevalier, if we do not escape before the expedition starts, how are we to escape at all?" exclaimed he that called himself François Albert.

"Easily. Join your ranks. Go with the expedition to Montreal. The plan aids your escape. You will thus avoid the fatigue, the dangers of traversing the sixty leagues as fugitives, to say nothing of the seven or eight days saved, which is not the least important consideration to me."

"Not bad. But when we are at Montreal?"

"The expedition will halt there some days. Make your escape on the night before it finally starts for the lake. You will hardly be missed in the confusion attending the departure; and if you should be, why you must use the ten or twelve hours gained on your pursuers like men determined to be free. Do you know the woods? can you follow an Indian trail? do you know how to make a canoe?"

"Be easy on that score; we were *coureurs de bois* before we enlisted," was the reply.

"Excellent: the difficulties disappear. So much for your affair; now for mine. You must both return to the château, furthermore, because I have not yet written the letters you are to carry. One will be addressed to the Governor of New England, at Boston; one to Major Schuyler, at Fort Orange,

who will furnish you with everything needful to facilitate your speedy arrival at Boston. Attend to what I say. Life and death are in your haste. If one falls by the way, the other must push on; were he able to crawl on his hands and knees, he must still *go on*. If my letter is in Governor Bradstreet's hands in five weeks, your reward shall be doubled."

"In five weeks, then, your letters shall arrive; though the devil take me if I can pronounce your governor's name," said Du Vignon.

"One word more: Avoid danger as you would the plague. Use every precaution to conceal your trail. Beware of the old camps. Shun every temptation to combat, even were you sure of victory; for during these five weeks your safety is of the highest importance; and for these weeks you do not belong to yourselves, but to me."

Both promised not to take a scalp or kill a venison except to secure that safety Nelson seemed to value so highly.

"When shall we receive these dèspatches from monsieur?" demanded Du Vignon, seeing Nelson had finished.

"Be on the watch to-morrow night. Do not leave the casern until you see me at my window: I will show a light when everything is ready."

"Agreed. And the fifty pistoles?"

"Never fear. You shall have them, with the letters."

"Pardon, monsieur—"

"Eh?"

"If we induce other comrades to join us at Montreal, would monsieur be sorry?"

"Do as you like. Stay: on second thought, do not try it. It increases the chances of detection."

"As monsieur prefers."

Everything being concluded, the conference broke up. The same precautions were taken in returning to the château as in leaving it; only, the soldiers, better acquainted with the ground, instead of clambering over the slippery wall, crept through an embrasure of the south-east bastion, closely followed by Nelson. The château lights were extinguished; the rain pattered dismally against the windows and pelted Nelson in the face. The darkness swallowed up his confederates, as the river below swallowed the rain-drops. To his joy he found his rope-ladder still in place; and though the ascent proved quite a different affair from the descent, he succeeded by incredible exertions and with the aid of his loops in hoisting himself to the open window, where his hand grasped a solid support. Nelson drew up his rope, shut the casement, and, rapidly divesting himself of his wet clothes, crept shivering into bed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FOREWARNED, FOREARMED.

Rouillard, on entering Nelson's chamber the next morning, found that young gentleman still abed. Great was his astonishment at seeing the prisoner's boots and hose spattered with mud, and greater still on perceiving a puddle of water on the floor beside the window. Putting this and that together, it was evident, first, that his charge had put a trick upon him; second, that he had left the château during the night. But how? Rouillard could take his oath he had securely locked the door, and the bolts had not been tampered with. Ah, the window! However, the master of apartments—such was Rouillard's title—was too experienced in evasions of this kind to manifest his surprise openly; and as Nelson gave no sign that he was aware

of Rouillard's presence, the latter turned on his heel and went out without a word.

Notwithstanding, Rouillard made his report to the major of the château, who said, "*Très bien.*"

"*Mais, monsieur,*" hazarded Rouillard.

"*Quoi?*"

"*Une evasion!*"

"*Pooh!*"

"*Toutefois.*"

"*Allez! allez!*" And the fat major laughed immoderately. "That dolt Rouillard talks of an escape, and the prisoner snugly in bed! the animal will never learn anything," he chuckled pleasantly to himself. Rouillard made a pirouette and left the room, bewildered with this hilarity, which he considered quite out of place. Besides, he had expected to be commended, and had only been laughed at for his pains. Still, he had his own suspicions—the major could not laugh them away. He would put himself on the scent, and if he discovered anything, why, they should see who would laugh! And he shuffled along the corridor, snuffing the air like a blood-hound. But his superior, who loved a joke, when he was not the subject of it, told the first friend who dropped in that they had now a good one on the rigid Puritan, the Chevalier Nelson, who, in spite of his sanctimonious face, had been chasing a petticoat all night. "And such a night, too!" added the good soul, with a shrug.

The moment he was left alone Nelson leaped out of bed. First he placed the chair on which his clothes were hanging so as to intercept the view of an eye applied to the key-hole. He then ran to a buffet, pulled out a drawer, and took from an opening behind a *pen and an inkhorn.* Darting his eyes *around the room,* they fell on a quarto of La Fontaine's "Fables" lying open on his table.

"On his majesty's service," said he, tearing out the fly-leaves. "Now for my letters. But it is forbidden to a prisoner to write, and that prying imbecile Rouillard suspects. Halloo! here he is." Nelson had barely time to jump into bed again, to conceal pen, ink, and paper beneath the clothes, when Rouillard opened the door and thrust in his head.

"It appears you still suffer, monsieur?" observed the spy, rolling his eyes around the room, as if interrogating the walls.

"Ah," said Nelson, feigning a yawn, "you are there, Rouillard, are you? What o'clock is it?"

"Half-past nine, sir. They ask news of you below. Does your honor require anything?"

"Nothing," replied Nelson, turning his face to the wall. "I shall not get up for an hour yet."

"Monsieur must have passed a very restless night," pursued Rouillard, an expression of utter vacuity on his fat face.

"Very restless, Rouillard, very," yawned Nelson.

"Monsieur's bed has broken down."

"I believe so," said the prisoner, tranquilly.

"The night wind has forced his window open, and the rain inundated his chamber."

"Perhaps."

"And see!" continued the tormentor, laying his hand on Nelson's well-soaked garments, "monsieur's clothes are damp; *comment donc?*"

"Easily explained. I must have been delirious during the night: stay, I must have dressed myself, opened the window—"

"But your justaucorps is as wet as sponge; and, mon Dieu! your chaus-

ses," holding up the articles in question, "in what a state!"

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Nelson, sitting bolt upright in bed.

"What is the matter, sir?"

"You will not betray me?"

"I, monsieur—I?" stammered Rouillard, believing himself at last on the traces of Nelson's nocturnal adventure.

"But you must swear," insisted Nelson, launching an imploring look at Rouillard.

"I swear not to betray you, sir," said the false Rouillard, now on the tiptoe of expectation.

"I believe I may trust you—I will trust you," said Nelson, very composedly, stretching himself at full length and turning his back to Rouillard; "I am a somnambulist."

"A what?" stammered the inquisitor, with great eyes.

"A somnambulist—one who walks in his sleep. I must have taken a turn around the gutters of the château in the night."

"The devil!" ejaculated Rouillard, slamming the door.

"Now for the letters!" exclaimed Nelson.

Resting the "Fables" against his knees, he had written a few lines, when the report of a cannon checked his pen in the middle of a word. "An arrival," thought he, resuming his writing.

In less than five minutes his evil genius again raised the latch and looked in. This time his steps were so stealthy that the letter-writer had only time to resume a recumbent position before the spy was upon him. "Decidedly, if he asks for my letter, I will give it him with one hand and strangle him with the other," was Nelson's inward determination. Thanks to his arrangement of the chair, Rouillard had been unable to see what Nelson was doing by way of the key-hole. But he still had his suspicions.

"Good news, Monsieur Nelson!" said Rouillard, briskly; "good news!"

"Good news for whom?" asked Nelson, becoming attentive.

"For you, without doubt," said the attendant, pressing his hand to his side. "Behold me breathless with running to tell monsieur first of all."

"Go on, then," said Nelson, indifferently; "let us hear thy great news."

"A flag of truce has just anchored in the basin."

Nelson's heart gave a bound. He half sprang from the bed, but had the presence of mind to restrain himself. Already that busy brain was weighing the consequences of escape, and hope, suddenly awakened, sparkled in Nelson's eyes. This flag, might it not dispense with his hazardous scheme altogether? No doubt it was sent to effect an exchange. No doubt he was comprised, or would be comprised, in that exchange. How fortunate! He would be the bearer of his own intelligence: perhaps the chosen instrument to defeat the designs of Frontenac. In that case—and his thought found expression in a grim smile—the governor should learn the difference between Nelson a prisoner and Nelson free. And here was freedom at last! Tears started in his eyes. He ached to shout—to do something, no matter what, or how foolish, if it would give vent to his overcharged feelings. But there stood that grinning animal Rouillard, and it revolted Nelson to betray his joy before this fellow. Therefore he hurrahed, mentally, three times three. He began to feel the returning sensation of ownership in himself—as if the world, his world, had readjusted itself in order that he might once more take his place in it as a unit, and not a cipher. The long, deep respiration he

took seemed like the breath of liberty, it was so charged with hope and joy.

Calm yourself, and reflect like a man of sense, John Nelson. Are you not counting your chickens before they are hatched, my friend? Such was Nelson's reasoning, after his momentary and altogether natural enthusiasm subsided. He had a clear head, which presently responded to his question, "Finish your letters; be prepared for the emergency; and in the mean time learn what you can of this new avenue of escape." So he said:

"A thousand thanks, my good Rouillard. Run and bring me all the news you can gather of this arrival. Make haste: there is a louis waiting for you."

"Expect me in half an hour."

Rouillard went out, muttering to himself, "That fable about walking in his sleep—bah! Suppose it does explain the wet clothes, how about the mud? Catch an old bird with chaff, will you? *Allons donc*, you do not know Jean Baptiste Rouillard."

Nelson once more took up his pen. He counted on having half an hour to himself: Rouillard was back again in just fifteen minutes. However, the letter to Governor Bradstreet was completed, and that was the most important. Nelson raised himself on his elbow, questioning Rouillard by a look.

"Well, sir," began the now really breathless news-monger, "an officer has just boarded the flag-vessel, which brings a score of French prisoners and a demand from his excellency, Governor Fibs—"

"Governor who?" said Nelson, starting.

"Governor Fibs, to be sure; he who battered Quebec in '90."

"Phips, governor of Massachusetts Bay!" repeated Nelson, in a bewildered sort of way.

"*No doubt of it*, since the despatch for our governor is under his hand and seal as such."

"You are certain of that?"

"Positive."

"Finish your budget, then," said Nelson coldly, feeling sick at heart.

"His Excellency the Governor of New England proposes an exchange of these prisoners for certain, I know not which, of ours. That is all I could pick up in the antechamber."

"Give me my waistcoat, Rouillard."

The latter did as he was bid, and received on the spot the promised louis.

When he had gone, Nelson sat up in bed, his elbows on his knees, his face wedged between his hands, his fingers nervously wandering through his hair. It was evident that a bitter struggle was going on.

We have already alluded to the feeling of energetic repulsion existing between Nelson and Sir William, now Governor, Phips; but the reader will permit us to add a few words in regard to a man whose early career, if not his character, is so strongly tinged with the coloring of romance.

Sir William Phips was considered by the older families of the Bay province, the men of birth and breeding, to have bought and pushed his way to the position he coveted. This was sufficient to arouse the prejudices of a class, little numerous, perhaps, but wealthy, influential, and holding obstinately to its traditions. "Heretofore, in the history of the colony," said they, "our chief magistrates were at least men of recognized condition." More than this, none others were, in their opinion, eligible to the high office. "Was this the man," it was asked, "who owed his knighthood to having scraped and dragged up from the bottom of the sea the treasure of a sunken galleon—a man coarse by nature, vulgar by instinct, lawless from inclina-

tion—a man able without experience, enterprising without judgment, brave without prudence—was this the man whose name should be inscribed the successor of Endicott, of Winthrop, and of Vane?" For these reasons, and even for these objections, Sir William's attempts to create a party for himself were but coldly received in the higher circles of the colonial capital. Precisely for these reasons, adroitly made to take the appearance of aristocratic persecution, and because he had come out of their own ranks, Sir William was the idol of the populace.

It resulted that, instead of being welcomed by a united people, Sir William saw himself confronted by a powerful cabal, which acknowledged him as governor, but refused its moral support openly, its material support secretly. There were not wanting those who looked upon his elevation as hardly less than an affront put upon the colony. And this, we may add, was Nelson's conviction.

Thus the questions which agitated Nelson's mind had a double significance. With Phips the individual he had certainly nothing in common; but for Phips governor he felt an unconquerable aversion, a profound distrust. How explain why this man, who had not lifted a finger for the revolution, should be so signally rewarded? Nelson gave up the problem in equal disgust and despair. The question was perplexing, we admit. And now, should he aid this *parvenu*, whom he confessed he almost hated, to parry Frontenac's blow? Certes, of the two, this was the more difficult question. Decidedly, to do so demanded a self-abnegation almost superhuman; and he, alas! never felt until this moment how human he was.

Moreover, the weight of injuries *already borne without flinching* and without complaint began to overtask his moral strength, to overtax his moral courage. No wonder he began to weary of the effort to stand erect under the weight of his accumulated burdens, to be worn out with the never-ending struggle. He felt utterly despondent, incapable of further resistance, and was debating within himself whether it would not be better to give up the contest; to do what all the world seemed to be doing, and act only as his own selfish interests might dictate now and hereafter. "I have already experienced Phips's malignity," thought he; "shall I meekly turn Sir William the other cheek, when I have only to sit still to see him buried in the ruins of overwhelming disaster!" There was a kind of grim satisfaction in the thought, though it somehow failed to carry conviction along with it.

But it was now the turn of Nelson's good angel. There was another personality, which spoke without bitterness, without impatience, without passion; a counsellor to whom he, the man of generous impulses, above all, the man of strong common-sense, had never turned a deaf ear. This voice simply said, "Do your duty, John Nelson: God will take care of the rest." Vanquished, if not convinced, Nelson once more seized his pen, and, with a feverish haste which announced his anxiety to put an insuperable barrier between himself and temptation, dashed off his letters, folded them, and with a steady hand wrote the addresses. He then rose, and having dressed himself, remembered that he had not broken his fast for twenty-four hours.

Nelson experienced no difficulty in putting the letters and the pistoles into the hands of his messengers, and on the following morning the expedition departed. The governor delayed his own embarkation for a few hours, in order

to dispose of the affair of the flag of truce, when he too went on board his barge, which, in the midst of a general salute from the batteries, the roll of drums, and hurrahs of the soldiery, pushed out upon the broad stream. Nelson watched the flotilla until it disappeared in the distance.

All the previous day he had impatiently expected a summons before the governor to hear the welcome intelligence that he was a free man once more. But no such summons had come. Mechanically his eye wandered to the channel below the city, and there a vessel, which his practised eye knew at once for an English hull, was getting under way. His countenance brightened when the red cross went up to the mast-head, but it fell again as the vessel's prow turned from the inhospitable rock, and she slowly began to retrace her course down the St. Lawrence. A puff of smoke from her side, an answering gun from the fortress, and she was gone. Whatever her mission, there was no longer room for doubt it was ended—ended disastrously for him. Nelson turned away from the spot with a real sinking of the heart.

The flag, in effect, had been without result. Frontenac had signified his willingness to arrange a cartel according to the laws of war whenever those laws should be observed by the English themselves; but he declared his unalterable determination to detain all the prisoners in his hands until ample satisfaction had been given for the broken treaty of Port Royal, were it until the end of the war. Was this a pretext? We shall see.

Meanwhile time dragged heavily on, and Nelson, with an anxiety of mind easily understood, awaited the success of his plan. Not that he expected any direct intelligence from Albert or Du Vignon; but had they succeeded in effecting their escape? That was the question.

The governor had prolonged his stay beyond the period contemplated when he left Quebec, and rumors began to float in the air that this delay was caused by the frequent desertions from the garrison of Montreal. Report also said the desertions were numerous, that the governor-general appeared very uneasy, and was in a frightful temper.

All this was confirmed upon Frontenac's return. Not only Nelson's messengers, but many others, seduced by their persuasion or their example—for at the last, it seems, the two reprobates conceived the idea of levying an army capable of making head against any force that might be sent after them—got safely off. There was a vigorous pursuit. The governor strained every nerve to overtake the runaways, but his parties came back with the news that the fugitives were already too far on their way to the Dutch posts to be overtaken. Frontenac returned to Quebec greatly disturbed by this *contretemps*.

With the energy which was one of his distinguishing traits, the old soldier applied himself to the preparation of his armaments. He meditated a blow which should be the pendant of his gallant defence of Quebec; should make his fame resound at Versailles, and put New France beyond the fear of future insults from its insolent neighbors. After this he meditated retirement, where, solaced by some signal mark of his sovereign's favor, he might find that repose he had so fairly earned. But he would signalize his retirement by an extraordinary effort; his sun should set in a blaze of splendor.

The design of Frontenac was to lay waste the New England coast as far as

Boston, and he even purposed, should opportunity favor it, the destruction of that place. Thus he would complete the work heretofore but partially accomplished by his red allies, and this time sow three hundred miles of hostile coast with wreck, pillage, and slaughter. The plan had found favor at Versailles; nay more, it found what New England could not find at Whitehall—active encouragement and substantial help. The war-ships, the heavy cannon, the re-enforcements, the munitions demanded by Frontenac, had arrived, and with them the moment for action.

In the midst of all this activity, Frontenac was assailed by certain disquieting reflections. He had employed all the resources of his mind to perfect his schemes, all his vigilance to guard the secret of his intentions. Not even his most trusted lieutenants suspected his real purpose. The expedition to Fort Frontenac was a *ruse de guerre;* the offer of a cartel had been refused because he feared his precious secret might leak out. But the escape of those deserters! Were all his well-laid plans to prove unavailing, his precautions useless, because a few miserable wretches had eluded the watchfulness of their guards? Again, these simultaneous flights from Quebec and Montreal at this time could hardly be the result of accident. Was it treason? Perhaps. Was it the active agency of a determined enemy? In either case he would know the truth, and when he knew it his vengeance should be as terrible for the offenders as the failure of his plans would, he confessed, be to himself.

Absorbed in these reflections, Frontenac paced his cabinet, stopping occasionally to look out of the window at the ships moored in the basin, then resuming his march with his eyes fixed upon the floor. Suddenly he raised his head; his dull gray eyes emitted a dangerous light, and the deep crease between his eyebrows grew deeper under the heavy frown that gathered there.

"There is one man," he muttered, "capable of thwarting me, and him I had almost forgotten. But if he has played the spy," continued the count, ringing his bell violently, "let him look to himself!" The door opened as he finished this monologue.

"If the Sieur Nelson is in the château, send him to me at once. Do you hear, sirrah!" he cried, seeing the attendant hesitate.

"Monsieur le Compte is then ignorant—"

"He has not escaped?" questioned the count, eagerly.

"M. Nelson is sick, M. le Compte, of fever."

"Ah! and how long has he been ill?"

"These three days, excellency."

"Go and bring me news of him. Stay; who attends upon him?"

"The chirurgeon of the château, M. Flacon."

"Notify him that I expect him here at once."

"Yes, your excellency."

Nelson was indeed sick, having succumbed to a slow fever, which promised, so said the doctor, to prevent his leaving his bed for a fortnight at least.

"Hum!" said Frontenac to himself; "he is safe, then, for that time." But this assurance did not prevent the count's redoubling the stringency of his orders relative to his prisoners, nor his activity to despatch his expedition.

While Nelson tossed in his bed, consumed by fever and devoured with anxiety, Frontenac finished his dispositions, embarked his troops, and gave the last instructions to D'Iberville, its commander. The expedition sailed

for New England. On the same day and hour Du Vignon and his comrade spurred across the Neck, traversed the main street of Boston like the wind, and drew rein before the Town-house. The ruler of New France, the hitherto invincible Frontenac, had been foiled by the wit, the resources of the prisoner of the château.

CHAPTER XIX.

A MATTER OF HISTORY.

Fortune, as is often the case, thus far seconded the prisoner's designs with only too much complaisance; and when such is her mood, he who basks in the fleeting sunshine of her favor may presently expect to be rudely maltreated by that fickle courtesan. Like a gallant band whose treacherous guide chooses the moment of fancied security for the deadly ambuscade, her seductive smiles transform into ghastly mockeries, and our illusions vanish, leaving us stunned, incapable of comprehending what has befallen. It is, therefore, an axiom that for every smile thus bestowed the victim sooner or later receives a stab.

Forewarned, the authorities of the English capital strained every nerve to meet the crisis. As if she felt that the struggle would be close, would be deadly, New England roused herself for a supreme effort. Soldiers were mustered, garrisons strengthened, armed ships patrolled the threatened coasts. The old drums that beat in Philip's war now thundered in the market-places; couriers galloped over the high-roads, watch-fires blazed from headland to headland. Unexampled activity prevailed; martial preparation was everywhere. Forearmed, the sturdy English calmly awaited the attack.

But the attack never came. The armament prepared with so much labor, so much secrecy, and so much care, had lost the impulse of the master-mind. The nervous energy that launched the bolt was no longer present to press the advantage. Lingering here, tarrying there, the French ships at last appeared in sight of the towers of Pemaquid. Their commander saw the walls swarming with men, the matches lighted, the standards waving defiance. He heard the dull roll of drums, the clear tones of the trumpets, the cheers of the English soldiery: in a word, he heard the invitation to battle. Turning from this bewildering vision, this defiance, his eyes fell upon the black hull of a frigate, which was as silent as the fortress was full of martial noises. Frontenac had planned a surprise for the English; it was D'Iberville who was confounded.

Nevertheless, like a prudent commander, he counted the enemy's guns on his fingers. There were twenty-eight embrasures in the fort and fourteen port-holes in the frigate's side. His own force, then, was superior. His red auxiliaries, a formidable band, drawn up on the neighboring heights, with Saint Castin at their head, impatiently awaited the signal for the assault. But D'Iberville hesitated. Why? His daring was unquestioned, his orders to fight precise. Could it be possible that those warlike qualities which had hitherto signalized his career had especially marked him for Frontenac's confidence — could it be possible, we say, that these had suddenly vanished at sight of the enemy's preparations? We reject the hypothesis as inadmissible; there is no precedent in history for the sudden transformation of a brave man into a poltroon. Why then did he not give the signal? We have no other answer than this: His officers knew there was

a woman on board their admiral's ship, and as woman is at the bottom of every mystery, even of war, perhaps this weakness was the same which Antony felt at Actium. Gnawing his mustache in silent despair, D'Iberville gave the signal not for attack but retreat. It was received by the warriors with yells of baffled rage. They stamped upon the earth, drove their axes into the trees, and spat in impotent fury at the fortress. Some among them believed themselves betrayed.

Thus the expedition which, in the beginning, threatened such disastrous consequences, had for New England a happy ending; but for the prisoner of Quebec its results were quite different.

After the events we have just related, the authorities of Boston conceived the idea of seizing the person of Saint Castin, by way of reprisal. In this way they would obtain a prisoner of distinction, check the Abenaquis, and rid themselves of their most dangerous enemy all at once. The thing was easy, in appearance. They would not use violence, but treachery. With this object, the two messengers of Nelson, joined with two Acadian prisoners, were chosen as decoys to entrap Castin. But, unfortunately for the success of the plot, instead of carrying off Castin, the deserters were themselves betrayed, were questioned, confessed everything, and were on their way to Quebec, heavily-ironed, simultaneously with the news of D'Iberville's *fiasco*.

Frontenac, who had so many irons in the fire, foamed with rage. He commanded the two deserters to be brought before him, when they repeated, without contradicting each other in a single particular, the facts already known to the reader. "It was the Sieur Nelson who had *corrupted them*," they *said, concealing the fact* of their intended desertion. They were then reconducted to prison.

The count took up the despatches of D'Iberville and Villebon, which he ran over for the twentieth time, and for the twentieth time he read the following postscript at the foot of Villebon's communication:

"You see, Monsieur le Compte, as I have already had the honor to tell your excellency, that this Nelson is a very dangerous man."

Frontenac ground his teeth, and flung the papers, with an oath, on the table. The captain of his guard opened the door, but seeing the preoccupation of the governor, stood with the latch in his hand.

"Come in, sir, come in!" exclaimed the count.

The officer held a packet that moment brought to the château, with the explanation that a vessel from France was wind-bound twenty miles below the city: her captain, judging the contents of the despatches put into his hands at Rochelle by a courier wearing the livery of M. de Ponchartrain might be important, had thus expedited their delivery—a course he hoped would be pleasing to his excellency, the governor-general.

The count, without ceremony, snatched the packet from the speaker's hand, and having selected an envelope with the royal cipher in the corner, looked up at the officer, who stood nervously twirling his plumed hat in both hands.

"Apropos of those two *drôles*," he said, brusquely.

"The deserters?"

"Yes."

"I await your excellency's commands."

"Let them be shot at daybreak tomorrow morning."

"At the usual place of execution?"

"No; at the mill yonder," answered

the count, with a significant motion of the head.

The captain bowed and withdrew.

"So much for the tools!" muttered the count, breaking the seals of the letter. As he read, his brow became more and more gloomy, and before he had finished a looker-on would have believed he had been seized with vertigo. With one hand tightly pressed upon his temples, the other clutching at his neckcloth, the count staggered, gasping, to a chair. Nothing but the unnatural redness of his face disproved the idea that he had received a mortal thrust. But if not this, Frontenac was suffering from a stroke of apoplexy.

The letter which produced such a startling effect had fallen from his hands. It is for us to pick it up, to read a single extract:

"MONSIEUR LE COMPTE,—Upon the too free communication which I learn has been permitted to the Sieur Nelson, I ought to say to you, M. le Compte, that it might well be in your discretion to use toward him such measures of civility and kind treatment as may be to a prisoner of some distinction. But this should have rendered it indispensable to take greater precautions in order that a man like him, esteemed the most active, the most incensed against Canada, and the most fitting for the designs of the English to conduct their enterprises therein, should not be able to inform himself of the state in which you are, by the liberty he has had to see the strong places, and to freely communicate with all sorts of people. See to it, M. le Compte, that this indiscretion does not become a fault for you, and a reproach for us.

"Signed, LOUIS."

Little by little the count recovered from the disorder, physical and mental, into which the reading of the king's letter had thrown him. Little by little he regained his mastery over himself; but such a storm could hardly pass over without leaving some traces of its ravages behind. From red he became *pale, and there was a convulsive twitching about the corners* of his mouth.

"Fool, triple fool that I am!" he bitterly exclaimed. "What the king foresaw has come to pass. What, then, will he say when he knows how I have been tricked by this smooth hypocrite? But, by God's death, the marplot shall pay dearly for his exploit for my disgrace! On the word of Frontenac, he shall pay for it! Yes, my young upstart," added the governor, after a silence in which his features assumed an expression of ferocity, almost startling—"yes, yes, you have become a personage; your name has been pronounced by the King of France; so much the worse for you! so much the worse!"

Ten minutes later, still pale from his recent illness, but rejoicing in his heart that he, a poor prisoner, had succeeded in warding off the deadly stroke aimed at New England, Nelson stood before the wrathful Frontenac. He had not questioned the officer, he had divined. The cornet who accompanied him took two steps backward, as if to go out.

"Guard your prisoner!" curtly commanded the count.

The officer understood the inflection of that voice. He placed himself behind Nelson, unsheathed his sword, and dropped the point on the toe of his boot. The count's secretary was seated at the table, pen in hand. The count himself remained standing, with one hand behind his back—concealing thus the declaration of Du Vignon and Albert; the other was thrust in his bosom.

Nelson comprehended that these preliminaries announced that the crisis was come, and that he was thus suddenly relegated to the condition of a prisoner with whom gentle measures are laid aside.

He folded his arms and waited to be addressed. The governor did not keep him in suspense.

"So, sir!" said he, without preamble, "you have been playing the spy."

"M. le Compte!" cried Nelson, drawing himself up.

"Oh, do not deny it—denial is useless. Here," showing the *procès-verbal*, which he struck violently at every word, "are the proofs."

Nelson held his tongue. The governor went on: "What ought to be the fate of a man in your condition, who betrays the generous confidence of his captors—of a man who, treated rather like a friend than an enemy, makes profit of his liberty to plot the destruction of those who have confided in his honor? I say," repeated Frontenac, stopping before Nelson and shaking the paper in his face, "what ought to be done with such a man? Come, what say you?"

"For such treason as you describe, no punishment would be too great, in my opinion," said Nelson, tranquilly.

"Mine also," vociferated Frontenac. "And, in so speaking, you have condemned yourself," he sternly added.

"No one knows better than your excellency that the case supposed does not apply to me."

"How not apply to you?"

"To-day I shall be frank with your excellency."

"It will be better, I warn you."

"I stand charged with abusing your excellency's hospitality, and of making it serve the purposes of a spy."

"You do."

"The charge is false."

"What! It is false?" stammered the count, amazed at the hardihood of the denial.

"It is a lie!" repeated Nelson, with energy."

"Beware! recollect in whose presence you are!" said the count, threateningly.

"Who are *my accusers*? I demand *to be confronted with them.*"

"Oh, this is too much! Do you persist in your foolish denial?"

"I do persist. My accusers—who and what are they?"

"Then, since you will have it, I accuse you—I, Frontenac!"

"Pardon! I had forgotten your excellency formulated my accusation."

"We waste time. If you have anything to say in extenuation, say it; but take care you speak the truth, for I hold in my hand the confession of your accomplices."

"Since your excellency is both accuser and judge, it is useless."

"As you will. Your silence is the evidence of guilt. I thought your confident bravado would fail you at last," said the governor, with a contemptuous shrug.

"Does your excellency promise to take down my declaration word for word?" Nelson asked.

The governor jerked his thumb over his shoulder, as much as to say, "The secretary is there; he will not lose a word."

Nelson understood the gesture. "It is of the last consequence to me that what I have to say is recorded *verbatim*. I cannot confess without your excellency's word of honor."

"You have it, then, *parole d'honneur*. Now unbosom yourself, and quickly," said the governor, in whose estimation Nelson had fallen many degrees since he had uttered the word "confess." Nelson remarked the change of voice and manner.

"Write, sir," said he to the secretary, "as I shall dictate."

The secretary dipped his pen in the ink and looked up, expectantly.

"Proceed!" said the count, shortly.

"I, John Nelson, of Boston, merchant, declare that, having fallen into the hands of his excellency Count Frontenac, I was refused either ransom, ex-

change, or release on parole, as I had the right to demand as prisoner of war, as I had the right to expect from the recognition of a generous enemy."

Frontenac shrugged his shoulders contemptuously at this preamble.

"I also declare that a certain high personage having invited me to become his guest, having tendered me, under conditions which I frankly and loyally accepted, the freedom of the city of Quebec, set his spies to watch and report my every movement."

The secretary's pen had stopped at the word "spies," and his eyes interrogated his master.

"Write," said Frontenac.

"—My movements," repeated Nelson, in the same collected voice. "As I am no casuist," he continued, turning to the governor, "I beg your excellency's opinion as to who was playing the spy."

The count reddened to the roots of his hair. He did not reply; he divined who had become the accuser.

"Convinced of the insincerity of this same personage," resumed the young man, "I believed myself absolved from the pact which honor imposes on every man capable of being bound by its laws. Do you understand, M. le Compte?"

The count was biting his nails. "Write! *pardieu*, write!" cried he, seeing the secretary looking sidewise at him.

"M. le Compte, who, I pray you, violated the laws of hospitality?" The count continued dumb.

"I declare further that this high personage made use of his power to seduce me from my allegiance. How do you define that, M. le Compte?"

"Conclude sir, conclude," ejaculated the now exasperated Frontenac.

"Lastly, I declare that, bound by no *promise, forbidden by no law of God or man, conscience* or honor, I made use of the intellect Heaven has given me to protect my country from the fury of her enemies. This, M. le Compte, is my confession."

"You are twice condemned," burst from the count: "once by your own lips, once by those of your accomplices. Their fate be yours! To your chamber, sir! Make your preparations to leave this world, for to-morrow morning you die! Officer, remove your prisoner." With these words, the governor turned his back on Nelson.

Nelson shuddered. He had not dreamed it would come to this. Surely Frontenac would not dare? Dare! There was no mistaking the purpose that shone from those cruel gray eyes. Dare! What would that furious old man not dare?

Nelson choked down his emotion, though he felt himself growing weak just when he most needed all his firmness. By a grand effort he regained his self-control. The officer threw open the door and made a slight motion of the head, signifying "Come." Nelson stepped to the threshold, faced half round, and with a voice without a tremor, but whose solemn tones vibrated in the innermost corners of his listeners' hearts said, "To-day, sir, I am in your hands: to-morrow I shall be in God's. My conscience approves what I have done; may yours rest easy after this day's work!"

When the speaker's voice was silent, and the door swung heavily to, Frontenac dismissed his secretary with an abrupt gesture, tore the accusing declaration in a thousand pieces, and scattered the fragments about the room. He then lighted an Indian pipe, and, throwing himself upon a chair, smoked with vehement puffs intermingled with angry snorts and half muttered curses that, like steam from a volcano, prefigured the smouldering fires within.

Nelson consumed half the night in writing. Having sealed the last letter he was to write on earth, he rose from his seat, went to the window, and stood a moment in the mellow radiance with which the moon flooded his chamber. Every object visible by day was lighted by its supernatural splendor. In the court-yard below, a sentinel paced up and down, trailing his long shadow after him. Trees, towers, steeples stood out in dark relief against the heavens, like funeral monuments in some vast church-yard. Black shadows draped the château walls like funeral velvet.

The heavens were glorious as the earth was profoundly sad; and Nelson, susceptible in the presence of Nature's solemn pomp, felt his soul exalted by the grandeur of the spectacle. Escape there was none, hope there was none; and, like a shipwrecked mariner, tossing on a stormy sea, his eyes wandered among the stars seeking rest.

The tramp of armed men in the corridor brought him rudely back to a sense of his actual situation. It was the guard being relieved. As the officer looked in and was about shutting the door softly, Nelson beckoned to him.

"Does monsieur wish anything?" asked the soldier.

"Yes. What is the appointed hour?"

The officer looked at the prisoner, looked away, and answered,

"Six o'clock."

"And what," pursued the prisoner with painful interest, "the manner?"

"The same as the others—by musketry."

"Thanks."

"Does monsieur wish anything more?"

"No, nothing."

"Good-night, then."

"Good-night."

"*I am glad I am not to suffer ignominiously*," thought the young man. "They say it is an easy death to die by a bullet. Who knows? Who knows how much anguish may be concentrated in a single instant? Pshaw! I must not be childish. Why should I so dread it? After all, I have not lived such a bad life; and if I could lie down there and never wake again! I wonder some way is not found to send criminals out of the world without pain; 'twould be so much more merciful than mangling, or strangling, or starving. But the example! I had forgotten the example. To kill is not enough. God grant me strength to die like a man!"

The prisoner threw himself, without taking off his clothes, on his bed, repeated the Lord's Prayer, the little prayer of infancy when he knelt at his mother's knee, and fell asleep, listening to the heavy foot-fall in the corridor, which relentlessly measured the time separating him from eternity. Ever and anon through the long night the door was softly opened, and the prisoner was seen sleeping as soundly as if at the beginning of a long and happy life, instead of standing on the threshold of another world. And each time the veteran muttered to himself, "He is a brave fellow; *parbleu!* it is a thousand pities to shoot him like a dog."

CHAPTER XX.

THE EXECUTION.

At half-past five o'clock Nelson was aroused by a knocking at his door. He raised himself into a sitting posture, and rubbed his eyes like a man awakened from a delicious and wholly untroubled slumber.

It was broad daylight. The sun already gilded the gray battlements of the château, the brown steeples of the

city, and the yellow masts of the shipping. The steaming surface of the river flung off the damp vapors of the night as a burnished mirror chases away a sullying breath, bringing into view the black hulls of craft before invisible. Every casement shone with a splendor too dazzling to look upon. One would have said the city opened its thousand eyes by enchantment.

Quebec was already astir. The air already resounded with a *mêlange* of noises signalizing the advent of a new day. Cattle lowed, horses neighed, cocks crowed lustily in the stables of the château. The birds sang sweetly in the tree-tops; the balmy breath of morning came in at the open window laden with perfume fresh from the verdurous fields. Nelson remembered what the morning was for him.

He finished his toilet carefully and without haste, and smiled on perceiving that his hand did not tremble. "Courage! courage!" he murmured. "It is only a walk in the fields, a puff, and the account is closed. I shall pay all my debts, that of nature included, in an instant. I hope the rascals won't mutilate me, though; for I would die like a gentleman." Is it not strange that Nelson, who did not shrink from death itself, recoiled at the thought of being struck by a bullet in the face, as Pompey's soldiers at Pharsalia recoiled from Cæsar's veterans? "Poor Lois!" continued the young man, "I hope she will be spared the knowledge of this. She loved me, I am sure, and I, I shall die with her name on my lips, instead of my God's." Two large drops rolled down his cheeks. "Pshaw!" he exclaimed, dashing them aside; "pluck up heart, man! Courage! courage!"

A second knock was heard; the door opened, and the captain of Frontenac's *guards entered the* room, followed by *a file of soldiers* and a priest. The soldiers silently stationed themselves on each side of the door. Nelson received the new-comers as if they were come to pay him an ordinary visit.

The captain, on the contrary, appeared nervous and ill at ease when he asked the prisoner how he had passed the night.

"Well," replied Nelson. "There was neither dead-watch in the wainscot nor winding-sheet in the candle; and I dreamed of paradise."

"I am glad of it," said the captain, heartily. "Strong head, brave heart, sound stomach. We have some moments to spare. *Tiens*, Monsieur Nelson, here is a holy father whom his excellency sends you."

"I thank his excellency," said Nelson, who guessed the priest was not there to offer him, a heretic, the consolations of religion; he added, "I have already made peace with my Maker; nevertheless, the father is welcome."

The priest came nearer. "Son," he said, "I know you are not of our religion, and may not, therefore, receive the sacraments of our holy Church; yet should your conscience be troubled and the burden thereof grievous to bear, confide it, I adjure you, to me; and so you shall have peace of mind in the last moment."

The captain made a movement to retire. "Stay, sir," said Nelson. Then addressing the Franciscan with simple dignity: "Father, believe me when I say I have nothing to divulge—absolutely nothing; but if you will kindly undertake the commission, here are twenty pistoles. I pray you distribute them among my sick and needy countrymen in your hands. And now leave us."

The priest took the money, bowed low, and went out. "To you, captain," resumed Nelson, speaking earnestly, "a dying man prefers his last requests.

to you, as a soldier, as a man of honor."

"Command me," stammered the captain; "I swear to fulfil your wishes to the letter."

"Assure Count Frontenac that no further plots of mine menace his security; that I pray his vengeance may die with me, the cause; his clemency for his unfortunate captives, whose separation from country and kindred is a lingering death, be shown in their enlargement by ransom or exchange. I have no confederates; not one among them knew of my design."

The captain nodded. "I undertake to repeat your message word for word."

"When all is over, forward these letters by a safe conveyance. They relate to my private affairs, and contain no dangerous secrets," said Nelson, smiling sadly.

"Consider it done."

"Now take this ring," continued the prisoner, drawing a sapphire from his finger, "in remembrance of me; but you must promise that my poor body shall receive no insult; and this—" opening his waistcoat so as to show the locket containing Lois's hair—"this must be buried with me. You understand?"

The captain seized Nelson's hand and wrung it. "It shall be as you wish; on my salvation it shall!" he ejaculated.

A few trifling bequests were distributed among the servants of the château, and then Nelson signified that he was ready.

Six o'clock sounded. The matin chimes pealed from all the belfries of Quebec. With the first stroke, a roll of drums, a rattle of arms mingled with voices of command, announced the turning out of the garrison. In five minutes all was still again, except the tu*mult of the bells.* Nelson took the captain's proffered arm, and descended the grand staircase of the château with head erect and firm step.

The entire garrison was under arms in the court-yard. The drums were muffled, the colors furled, the officers' halberds tied with crape. Two strong battalions, composing the van and rear-guard of the cortège, were already formed, and only waited the word of command to march. Between these bodies of troops, in an open space left for the purpose, was a charette, or common country cart, drawn by two strong horses. On this humble vehicle all eyes were centred, for, seated on their coffins, and heavily ironed, were the condemned deserters, Du Vignon and Albert. They listened, or seemed to listen, to a priest, who constantly repeated prayers, and as constantly held the crucifix before them; and from moment to moment the confessor pressed the sacred symbol to their parched lips, betraying, as he did so, an emotion which had no reflection in the demeanor of his penitents. There was a third coffin in the cart.

Nelson's fearless glance took in all these frightful preliminaries, but stopped fascinated at sight of the vehicle and its occupants. His soul revolted at the thought of being dragged thus disgracefully to execution amidst the scoffs and jeers of the populace. He grew very pale, and slightly pressed the captain's arm. Divining the cause, the latter whispered in Nelson's ear, and then, with a delicacy which did him honor, led the prisoner to a place immediately behind the firing-party, which was drawn up a few paces in the rear of the leading battalion.

Nelson let go the captain's supporting arm, but the honest guardsman had no thought of leaving his unhappy friend thus. His own presence would serve to protect the prisoner from any

indignity; so he announced his determination to walk by his side—an act of devotion which Nelson could only reward by a look of gratitude. Everything being in readiness, the order was given to march, and the head of the procession immediately filed through the vaulted gate-way of the fortress. Here it was met by a dense throng, which fell back and opened a passage before it, and, when it had passed by, followed closely after. Nelson's preoccupation did not prevent his remarking the presence of women with babes in their arms, who, with unaccountable fatuity, pressed on with the rest. As the funeral cortège moved, all the bells in the city began to clang discordantly.

When Nelson came to the gate he turned to take a last look at the château. All the windows of the *rez-de-chaussée* and of the second story were black with heads; and among them he recognized Tyng and Alden, whom he now saw for the first time since the day of their incarceration. He waved an adieu, which they eagerly returned, and passed on haunted by the pale faces and hollow eyes of his compatriots. In order that they might take warning from Nelson's fate, Frontenac had commanded their presence at this painful spectacle.

It was perhaps a short half mile to the designated place of execution, which Frontenac, as we have said, had decided should be the same chosen by the three conspirators for their rendezvous. In a quarter of an hour the escort halted, the troops quickly and silently forming three sides of a square. This manœuvre being executed, the cart was driven within the living enclosure, followed by the platoon detailed for firing. By one of those incomprehensible impulses, of which we can offer *no explanation,* Nelson stooped and *plucked a violet* growing at his feet.

Beyond the serried ranks of soldiery rose the decrepit form of the mill, its skeleton arms creaking dismally when swayed hither and thither by the fresh morning breeze. Perched on the extremity of the uppermost shaft, flapping uneasy wings at every movement it made, a raven eyed the proceedings with inquisitive glances. Thirty or forty paces in front of the line of troops the greensward showed three graves, dug at equal distances apart. The condemned were now ordered to alight, and while their irons were being knocked off the coffins were deposited beside the graves. The cart was then driven off the ground. All the while the priest repeated his prayers and continued his exhortations. The two deserters were now blindfolded, pinioned, and, having taken leave of their confessor, were made to kneel, each on his coffin. It appeared that they were to suffer first, and that Nelson must undergo the additional, the calculated torture of witnessing their sufferings. But for these two the final moment was come.

In the midst of death-like stillness the provost-marshal made a signal with his arm, upon which the platoon advanced to within ten paces of the kneeling men, and halted. At a second sign the front rank levelled their muskets. The officer then slowly drew a handkerchief from his pocket, held it an instant at arm's length, and dropped it to the ground. Instantly there was a deafening discharge, followed by a thick volume of powder-smoke which drifted into the faces of the spectators, shutting out the horrible spectacle. Not a soldier nor a looker-on was there who did not believe he had heard the bullets strike their human targets; that is, he had heard the tearing of flesh and cracking of bones. A shudder ran through the ranks; an electric shock

traversed the breathless, palpitating multitude.

When the smoke melted away Du Vignon was seen stretched across his coffin stone dead. His comrade, mortally wounded, and covered with blood, convulsively tore up the grass by handfuls in the effort to drag himself from the fatal spot. A murmur of horror forced itself from the spectators' lips. "My God, this is horrible," whispered Nelson, turning away his eyes. The officer hastily made a fourth signal. The second rank aimed at the ghastly object before them. A second explosion, and the wounded man shuddered from head to foot, gasped, and ceased to struggle. One ball had passed through his heart, another through his brain.

But we hasten to economize the reader's suspense. Every one understood that the crowning act of the dismal tragedy had been reserved for the last; and as if each and all, from colonel to simple soldier, felt its need, a moment's breathing-time preceded the catastrophe. Moreover, no one in that vast crowd believed Frontenac had made all this fuss about shooting two deserters, when a file of soldiers and a corner of the château wall would have finished their affair. It was for the Englishman, then, that the governor made all this display. What had passed was merely the prologue of the drama.

Nelson profited by the respite to squeeze the captain's hand, and to glide in his ear the word "remember." A significant pressure assured him he was understood. He then took leave of the officers standing near, some of whom did not attempt to conceal their emotion. Then he unclasped his mantle, threw it on the grass, did the same with his hat, and declared himself ready. An assistant approached to *bandage his eyes*, but the prisoner waved him back. "Please God," he said, and his pale cheek flushed, "you shall see how an innocent man can die."

After a few moments' delay, by one of those unaccountable revulsions which hurries it from one to another extreme, the crowd began to manifest impatience to finish the tragedy. Perhaps the greater number felt that they could not much longer support the tension. Perhaps—and God knows why it should be so—native ferocity was only whetted by the sight of human blood. However, the uneasy shifting about, the breaking up of the crowd into little groups, were speedily put an end to, when the prisoner was led to the fatal spot and left standing alone in the trampled and bloody grass, sustaining the gaze of all those eager eyes. Bareheaded, his shirt open at the neck, his head slightly thrown back, one hand thrust in his bosom, the other hanging by his side, the statuesque figure, the dignified yet intrepid mien, secured for the doomed man the sympathy of some, and the admiration of all.

"How handsome he is!" "How young!" "Holy Virgin, to die thus!" "Had he wife or sweetheart?" were among the exclamations which testified the interest of the tender sex in the prisoner. "What a noble presence!" "See how calmly he looks around!" "A brave lad, that!" were the spoken thoughts of the men. "He is only getting his deserts, the spy!" growled a bigoted bourgeois in the ear of his tearful spouse; "but you women," he added, with a contemptuous shrug, "are always like that. Blubber away, dame! blubber away!"

"Hold thy cruel tongue, brute!" responded the good-wife, with sudden joy at finding a legitimate outlet for her emotion; "hold thy wicked tongue! He is a hero, spy or no spy. He saved his country while these cowardly

wretches sold theirs. Small fear of such as thou dying to save thine own. But you can see no difference, I suppose." The subject of these cutting remarks lowered his head, but did not reply.

"*C'est vrai*, Mother Marguerite," observed a by-stander; "that which makes the Sieur Nelson a criminal here makes him a hero over the frontier."

"But he is a heretic; and heretics, Father Bonvivant says, are not fit to live," interposed a by-stander, with a low frontal development.

"*Ah, mon Dieu!* See, they are going to fire!" ejaculated the previous speaker, standing upon tiptoe. The voices were instantly hushed.

The soldiers reloaded their muskets. The stark bodies were tumbled with little ceremony into the coffins; the prisoner stood undauntedly facing the executioners. For him the bitterness of death was past; the pain was nothing. The provost again made the fatal signal, the soldiers covered Nelson with fatal aim, there was an instant of supreme suspense, when, to the astonishment of lookers-on and prisoner alike, an authoritative voice cried out, "Recover!"

The voice was recognized and obeyed, while every eye turned toward the spot whence it proceeded. Nelson knew that voice, and stood as if his feet had taken root as he saw the soldierly figure of Frontenac push its way through the ranks and advance into the open space beyond. The officers hastened, hat in hand, to surround their superior, who, after exchanging half a dozen words with the commander of the troops, immediately mounted his horse and rode toward the château; while the latter, seemingly as much bewildered by the tenor of the communication as by the violation of military etiquette, hastened to acquaint the prisoner that his excellency the governor-general had been pleased to commute the sentence of which he stood in peril. Nelson felt his strength failing. He tottered, and would have fallen, but for the friendly arm of the captain, who whispered in his ear, "*Du courage, mon ami*, you are saved!"

It was true. Nelson had escaped the death-penalty, after enduring all the mental torture the ingenuity of Frontenac was capable of devising. But the governor's resentment did not stop here. He knew perfectly well that for such a spirit as Nelson's there are punishments worse than death; and he had acted upon the knowledge with infernal perspicacity. He had imagined, directed the trial of the morning, even to its most minute detail, to the end that his enemy might not escape the smallest pang in his power to inflict. Now for the final stroke; now to forever rid himself of this stumbling-block, this evil genius, this malignant influence, which had dared to obscure his fortunate, his victorious star.

Instead of returning to the château, Nelson was conducted to the lower town, where a boat was waiting to take him on board a transport getting under sail in the stream. The captain had received his orders from the governor himself, and only waited the arrival of the prisoner to trip his anchor.

"Where are you taking me?" demanded the prisoner, when his foot touched the deck.

"To France," replied the captain.

"To France!" ejaculated Nelson, thunderstruck.

"*Mais oui*—to France," repeated the captain, putting his trumpet to his mouth.

The next morning the *Bel Paon* was forty miles down the St. Lawrence. We will let her pursue her voyage to La Rochelle, leaving Nelson to that

rest of which, after such a day, he stood in urgent need; for, to tell the truth, he was half dead with fatigue, and felt his nervous energy rudely shaken by the continued reaction from despair to hope, from hope to despair.

Had he known the contents of the despatch which Frontenac's aide-de-camp put into the hands of the captain of the *Bel Paon*, we doubt if his slumbers would have been of a nature to bring repose. Perhaps ignorance was for him the greatest of blessings; but, ignorant or not, sleeping or waking, his destiny was being accomplished with unerring certainty.

CHAPTER XXI.

TWO OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

We will now introduce the reader into a pretty sitting-room in a retired quarter of London. The furnishing was modest but elegant. A high mantel of richly-carved oak, inlaid with pictured tiles, appropriately framed the capacious fireplace. Any visitor might see his face reflected in the globes of the spindle-legged fire-irons, and we doubt if his gloves would have been soiled by handling the well-polished brasses. In the centre of the room a handsome Turkey-rug covered a goodly area of the bare floor, and in the middle of this stood a work-table, with a portly arm-chair and footstool conveniently near. This spot seemed the charmed circle, the consecrated ground, so to speak, of the presiding goddess; for everything, tangible or intangible, seen or unseen, announced the boudoir of a woman—a woman of refined tastes and elegant habits. No other hand than a woman's could have arranged those flowers on the mantel; but if further confirmation were needed, the *harpsichord in the corner*, the embroidery-frame, the delicate needle-work lying upon the table, were sufficient evidence of the fact. A rich and softened light came through chinks of the heavy silken curtains. The perfume of roses and of honeysuckle drifted in at the open window, heightening the indescribable charm which pervaded the apartment, intensifying that glamour whose mysterious influence, so apparent to the senses, defies the power of language to analyze or portray. We yield to an intoxication we have neither the wish nor power to resist. A sofa, three or four chairs, whose legs looked as if they had become permanently crooked under too much sitting down, were placed near the walls.

Though this enticing retreat was without an occupant, some one had evidently only just quitted it, and in haste, for a lady's embroidered handkerchief lay where it had fallen to the floor when the fair unknown rose from the arm-chair to go out. An open book upon the table confirmed the idea that she had been interrupted in the act of reading. Presently the sound of voices came in at the open door, then footsteps, and then a lady and gentleman entered the room hand in hand.

The lady was still young and beautiful, but the gentleman had grown somewhat corpulent since we last saw him in Tremont Street. His double chin, or, rather, some folds of fat into which that feature had forever retreated, was become still more prominent, his wrinkles deeper, his color more rubicund. Still, it was the same good face that we have known—a face you felt that you could trust. The lady was the picture of health. The transparent delicacy of her skin was increased by the glow of warm blood beneath, and but for a more settled expression about the mouth, a more thoughtful look in the fine eyes, and the suspicion of a line between the

delicate eyebrows, we should have said Time had forgotten or had not dared to mar so fair a specimen of nature's handiwork. There was a little more of the woman, but the woman was not a whit less attractive than the girl. Seeing the handkerchief, the old gentleman took it up and presented it, with a stately reverence, to the lady.

"Ah," laughed she, making a studied courtesy in return, "any one may see that you have just come from Kensington. But what, I pray, brings you home so early? I did not look for you back these two hours. Who was present? How did the king look? Did he speak to you? What said he? Tell me all about it. Don't you see I'm dying with impatience?"

The person so overwhelmed with questions gave his companion a quizzical look, threw up both hands, and had immediate recourse to his snuffbox; while she gently forced him to sit in the capacious arm-chair, where she held him, as it were, close prisoner.

"The audience," replied Erving, with studied deliberation, "was very brief. His majesty had just been closeted for an hour with my Lord Shrewsbury, and seemed rather fatigued. As soon, after answering the two or three questions the king was graciously pleased to ask me, as etiquette would permit, I took my leave, called a chair, and am here"—looking around him with an expression of mock alarm—"in the retreat of the Amazons."

"What, father! compare me with those dreadful creatures? But no matter, sir; now that you are here, you are going to take a cup of tea with me, *tête-à-tête;* and while we are drinking it, tell me all about it, that's a dear!" pleaded the lady, with her most bewitching smile.

"Thanks, my dear! If you wish it, *certainly."*

Lois rang the bell, when a tidy-looking waiting-maid appeared, who in a few minutes returned with a tray, which she placed on the table, and then, at a sign from Lois, went out. Lois filled two delicate cups with the fragrant infusion, and handed one to her father.

After sipping his tea awhile in silence, the old gentleman, without looking up, asked, "Who think you I saw to-day at the palace?"

"I can't imagine," said she, reflectively. "Who?"

"Sir Purbeck Temple," replied Erving, assiduously stirring his tea.

Lois slowly drew back, and her color began to rise. She kept her eyes upon her father, who did not, however, seem conscious that she was looking at him.

"Yes," he continued, "Sir Purbeck was also a suitor at Kensington to-day; we met on the palace stairs."

"Do have another cup, father," said Lois, busying herself with the tea-things. The poor girl was burning with curiosity.

"Thank you. 'Tis a grateful drink, though unmercifully dear," observed he, wiping his mouth with his napkin, and relapsing into thoughtfulness.

"Did you speak with Sir Purbeck, sir?" hazarded Lois, timidly.

"Yes; and a monstrous strange story he told me—monstrous!" ejaculated the old man, shaking his head.

"About any one that I know?" pursued Lois.

"Some one you have known—yes," with significant emphasis on the "have."

"Oh, father!"

"Tut, tut, child!" said Erving, turning suddenly upon his daughter. "What is that person to you? Have you not, then, forgotten?"

"Forgotten, sir!" murmured Lois, blushing painfully.

"Ay, girl, forgotten: or do you, proud-spirited Erving that you are, mean to mope the rest of your days for a man who, I engage, has forgotten? Recollect, four years is a monstrous long time; and in all those years not a word, not a syllable—nothing but silence. And, after all, what else could you expect, I should admire to know? Strengthen yourself—strengthen yourself, I say! you shall not wear out your life brooding over such foolish fantasies. Why, child," said the old man, suddenly changing his chiding tone for one of tender reproach, "you know full well your welfare is now the sole concern of my life. Abandon this seclusion. Re-enter the world, and give yourself a chance for happiness. At your age everything should be bright. Let me but see you well mated, and the old man is ready to depart. "There, you jade!" patting her head, "don't try to look your old father out of countenance."

Lois pushed the footstool close to her father's chair, seated herself, and, clasping her hands over his knee, looked up in his face. Between those two there was to be no half-confidence, no dissimulation.

When her father first began, an unspeakable dread came over Lois. "He is either married or dead," she thought. But, as the old man went on, she perceived her mistake. She breathed again. "If that had been true," she argued, "he would have told me." Somewhat tranquillized by this assurance, Lois said, very earnestly, "Sir, you are too kind, too indulgent, to such a wayward creature as I. Don't be angry with me, but I can't understand what you mean by forgetting. If a broken pledge absolved one from—from"—here Lois's voice became unsteady, and her eyes drooped—"if a *few hastily spoken* words might eradicate what has become as much part of you as your own flesh and blood, then I could understand. When you ask me, as you did just now, to think of another future, I can only think of it as possible in one way; and that way I dare not think of," she said, very dolefully. Then raising her eyes, humid and sparkling, "No, no: I will never live or act a lie; I will never meanly stake my own or another's happiness on the gourmand's maxim that appetite comes by eating. I don't believe in love warmed over."

"But with such an excellent memory, you surely cannot have forgotten that you gave young Nelson the mitten," said Erving, bluntly, feeling that heroic treatment was necessary here. "Honor, pride, self-respect, forbid your forgetting that, I should think."

Lois recoiled at the blow. "Ay, there it is: I did use him basely, and he can never forgive me," she murmured, letting her head fall on her father's knee.

"All stuff, girl! You did your duty in discarding the worthless fellow. Come, don't look as if you would like to eat me! Shake off this morbid sentimentalism. Why, you silly child, the world has not stood still since we have lived here like maggots in a cheese. Time enough to have formed a dozen attachments—ay, twenty, for that matter," stroking his chin.

"Father, don't laugh at me, but something tells me Nelson is still true, is waiting for me. I know not how to explain such things, I can only feel them; but so long as I believe this, and I do believe it," said she, with energy, "I cannot, dare not entertain the suit of another. 'Tis treason to him and to my own heart. Don't urge me, father. Let me hope a little longer."

"Dreams, girl, dreams! The wish is father to the thought."

"Have your way, sir. I don't expect to convince you, but I do know my own sensations."

"This is mere childishness. Put away these remorseful thoughts. You only obeyed your father. We were both deceived."

"Say we deceived ourselves. Nelson never deceived. Now that I have had time to reflect, I respect his motives—ay, a thousand times more than if he had been false to his convictions for my sake. It was I who tempted him to his dishonor, miserable woman that I am! and now I know, I feel, that I should some time have despised him for it way down in my heart, as he perhaps despises me at this moment. Oh, blind, blind!"

"'Gad, she does love him; and has the right of the argument too! But I must be wary," thought the crafty Erving. "Concerning Sir Purbeck," said he, returning abruptly to the original topic, "it was apropos of Nelson that he had demanded audience of the king."

Lois was instantly all ears. "What, father! of him?" she stammered.

"None other. The matter, as I had it from the knight, was thus: You know that about two years ago Nelson suddenly disappeared, no one knew whither."

"Yes, yes, I know. Go on, go on!"

"It was reported at Boston that he had been shot at Quebec, but upon better intelligence the story proved untrue. He was condemned, but reprieved at the place of execution. So much is certain. The truth is, Lois, Sir William Phips did not love Nelson, and so did not actively interest himself in his fate, though the lad risked his life to send the governor timely information of Frontenac's warlike preparations," concluded the ex-councillor. "I should like to squeeze the lad's hand for the deed," said he to himself.

"My brave, noble Nelson! I should like to hug him for it!" thought Lois. "I should like to tell Sir William my opinion of his conduct!" was what she said aloud, while her father helped himself to a pinch of snuff.

"It certainly looks badly for Sir William. Indeed, he appears to have made neither representations to the home government, nor demands upon Count Frontenac concerning Nelson's disappearance."

"The wretch! the cold-blooded wretch!" was all Lois could articulate.

"Compose yourself. The strangest part is to come. Sir Purbeck has just learned that his nephew is in France."

"In France!" cried Lois, her first emotion being one of joy that he was so near.

"Yes, in France. To make a long story short, his uncle had received a letter saying that Nelson had been two years confined in Angoulême Castle, near La Rochelle."

"Two years a prisoner! Oh the villains! But this was not all. What more said he?"

"Absolutely all. Sir Purbeck is of opinion that Nelson ran great hazard in attempting to send even this information, or he would not have remained so long silent. It was to entreat the king to demand his nephew's release of the French court that brought the knight to the palace. Strange that they should have adopted such harsh measures with Nelson! They must look upon him as a person of importance."

"And is there nothing we can do to save him? Think, father, think!" said Lois, vehemently.

"Nothing," replied her father, shaking his head.

"At least join your entreaties to the knight's. Tell the king Nelson has dear friends, who fear he may die in some dreadful dungeon. Surely, if his majesty knew what Nelson had done for his cause, he would not suffer the poor gentleman to languish in a foreign prison."

"There, there, how you run on! Sir Purbeck has favor at court, and will leave no stone unturned to effect his nephew's liberation; while your father has only to-day succeeded in being recognized by the king as one of his most loyal subjects. Your prayer would avail little," said Erving, smiling; "and, my word for it, the appeal to the gratitude of the king will not be forgotten by Sir Purbeck."

"Then we must sit with folded hands while this crime is being consummated?"

"It would be better to employ them usefully. Work is a sovereign specific for trouble of the mind. Remember, we are at war with France. Curb your impatience, and leave the matter with those who can make themselves heard at St. Germain, or, at need, as far as Nelson's prison. Patience, girl, patience!"

"What an absurd demand, sir! who ever knew a woman to have patience when her soul cried out for action? Have you no resources? is there no way but to wait and wait on in this sickening suspense?"

"Softly, my lady, softly!" said Erving, deprecatingly. "What a stir the girl is making, to be sure! Here are not ten minutes gone since she learned her Bayard was alive, his friends active, his prospects looking up, and behold, she must have him pulled neck and heels out of the clutches of Louis the Fourteenth, without as much as saying, 'Sir, by your leave!'" ejaculated the ex-councillor. "Faith!" he continued, "you women are incomprehensible. Let Puck offer to put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes, ten to one you'll ask him to do it in twenty!"

Lois was silent. But *femme vaincu n'est pas femme convaincu.* She was experiencing a novel and, to her, delightful sensation. The veil which shrouded Nelson's fate had been lifted. Perhaps there was a future, after all. Still—and here a cloud obscured her sun—it was sickening to think hope so far off. She could scarcely discern it, except in the light of that faith she had so vaunted; and now that too seemed fading away into the gloomy, sombre twilight of doubt. But to it she must, she would cling to the last. If Nelson came back, they would meet. He would be as generous as she had been penitent. She had said she believed him still faithful to her—to her—and her lip quivered and the eyelids drooped—a woman who had set a price upon her love! Why did she shrink and tremble so now? Was it doubt, or fear? Oh, to resolve it! Was there no help for it—must she wait?

Erving sat attentively watching the play of Lois's countenance, which so faithfully reflected the alternations of hope and despair that passed through her mind. He had long ago forgiven Nelson his part in the revolution, the more readily now that he himself was fully reconciled to the existing order of things; now that the heat and passion of partisan strife had subsided. Not a doubt lingered in his mind that his destined son-in-law of the old days had been actuated by the purest, the most patriotic motives in taking up arms against King James. He saw that Protestant England had benefited by the change of monarchs. With such convictions, Royal Erving was

not the man to harbor foolish resentment. Nelson's story, as it had been told by his uncle in the king's antechamber, impressed him with greater respect for the character and worth of the young man. His misfortunes appealed powerfully to his sympathies, the old affection returned as he listened. How, then, blame his daughter for still loving? That she had accorded full and entire pardon was only too evident. More than this, she had let him see that her happiness was at stake. Still, the seasoned man of the world had grave doubts whether the state of Nelson's feelings would be found to justify his daughter's abounding confidence therein. Rebuffed by the father, repulsed by the daughter, smarting under the neglect of those he had served; suffering, perhaps broken in health and spirits, by a long and cruel imprisonment, would he not return a soured, a confirmed misanthrope? It was too much to expect of flesh and blood that he would forgive his enemies, persecutors, and slanderers out and out. Erving scratched his ear and looked puzzled.

"Truly, sir," said Lois at last, quite despondently, "I hardly know whether your news makes me more glad or sorry. Nelson lives—thank God for it! But who can tell the horror of such a life? Should he perish before help comes, it would be dreadful. It must not be! Heaven will not permit it!"

"Must is a big word, my daughter. Naught but a miracle can open his prison doors, and I warrant Nelson does not possess the ring of Gyges to render himself invisible, or he would have given his jailer the slip ere now. But come, I have a serious word to say to Mistress Lois Erving. First of all, it imports much to know whether you are a weak, silly girl, or the brave, helpful woman I have in my mind's eye?"

"Very weak, very foolish, sir. Never more so than to-day."

"Say you have a weak, silly old man for a father, you cozening jade! But listen; suppose, now, a certain person should return; suppose he should be possessed of quite different sentiments from those another person so confidently ascribes to him; suppose, in short—and I vow to you my belief leans that way—that his former passion for a certain young person has died a natural death. Zounds, sweetheart, one can't go on forever nursing a hopeless attachment!"

"Then I shall account myself greatly mistaken; but until I hear the truth from his own lips never will I believe it."

"Remember, it is for him to seek an interview."

"I know it."

"He must not suspect the state of your feelings until you are sure of his own."

"I should die of shame."

"Still, you believe he will seek you, in spite of all?"

"If he is the man I believe him to be, yes."

"Take care your idol does not prove common clay; the man should be unique."

"There are not two Nelsons in the world."

"If the scoundrel does not love her, he deserves to rot in his dungeon!" muttered Erving. "Promise, in any case, to be guided by me, and to take no steps without my knowledge," continued he, earnestly.

"Father!"

"Well, well, child; I fear nothing except that generous impulses may expose you to some cruel disappointment. If I am right, you must not be com-

promised for twenty Nelsons. If you are right, I promise to put pride in my pocket; in a word, to do everything to promote a reconciliation. Come, is it a bargain?"

Lois impulsively threw her arms around the old man's neck and kissed him.

"Sealed!" laughed the wily diplomatist, holding her at arm's length. "How's this!" he exclaimed, in an altered voice. "'Gad, the girl's crying!" Somehow his own eyes filled too, wink as vigorously as he might to conceal the weakness. "Plague take the fellow!" he muttered, blowing his nose to hide his agitation. "He shall marry her, if I have to go down on my knees, or let him run me through the body to appease his wounded pride."

Having taken this heroic resolution, Erving said a few comforting words to Lois, and then marched off to keep his appointment with Sir Purbeck Temple.

He found the baronet in excellent spirits. The king had listened to Nelson's story with marked interest, and had said he would presently take order upon his affair. "'Headed our cause at Boston, said you, sir? Foiled that old fox Frontenac? Come, come! this would be worth going to war about, had we not already one on our hands. His Christian Majesty shall answer us concerning this young man.' Depend upon it," concluded Sir Purbeck, "the king will keep his word."

Dutch William kept his word. He always did keep it. His grace of Nottingham addressed M. de Ponchartrain, demanding to know why Nelson had been treated with such undue severity. "His majesty," wrote the earl, "is loath to retaliate upon innocent persons now in his hands the cruelties he hears are practised toward his own subjects *in the king's* prisons; and I *am commanded to inform* your excellency that he is desirous of knowing the sentiments of His Most Christian Majesty on this subject before adopting a course so little according with his own merciful disposition. The king, my master, commands me, monseigneur, to demand the release of the said Nelson, according to the usages of civilized warfare."

Many formalities must be gone through with, many delays encountered, before a reply could be expected. A fortnight elapsed before a suitable opportunity presented itself of delivering the despatch on the French coast. Another would be gone before a courier could make the journey to Paris and back; and it was not believed the French Court would look upon the matter as one calling for urgent haste. Erving calculated that the reply would not reach London sooner than six weeks.

"And now, sir," said the old baronet, after the exchange of a few commonplaces, "permit me to thank you for the kindly interest you have taken in my nephew." The inflection given by the speaker to this civil speech said plainly enough, "To what should I attribute this interest in my family affairs?"

Erving felt called upon to explain; yet to do so was no easy matter. The haughty old baronet would be little likely to understand, much less appreciate, the reasons which influenced him —reasons which gave him a twinge even now to avow to himself. It was more probable Sir Purbeck would renounce his efforts in Nelson's behalf on the spot, if he believed him capable of the weakness which was the staff and support of the two arch-plotters at this juncture. Erving therefore replied with polite reserve that his former acquaintance with and friendship for Nelson moved him to these in-

quiries. He should with pleasure hear of his restoration to family and friends. And here the interview terminated.

The weeks crept by, for one anxious heart, at least, until the answer to the demand for Nelson's liberation arrived. After the usual stately formalities of phrase which the hostile attitude of the belligerents permitted him to extend and embellish, the French minister announced that the king had ordered an investigation into the circumstances of Nelson's detention. The natural clemency of the king's character was too well known, he said, to justify the belief that any other than impartial justice would be done; and for those Frenchmen who might be in the power of the English, the king was persuaded they would gladly welcome any hardship rather than the honor of France should suffer through them. "And so, monseigneur," concluded the minister, "God have you in His holy keeping."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHÂTEAU ANGOULÊME.

"Doubles grilles à gros clous,
Triples portes, forts verrous,
Aux âmes vraiment méchantes
Vous representez l'enfer:
Mais aux ames innocentes
Vous n'êtes que du bois, des pierres et du fer."

PELISSON.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage."

LOVELACE.

THE ancient Château Angoulême was one of those monuments of feudal despotism, half fortress, half prison, which the invention of artillery had condemned to impotency as a bulwark of defence, but which, in the reign of the "great jailer of Europe," still preserved its distinctive character of bastile unimpaired. It stood at the foot of a mountain, upon the borders of the high plateau on which the old city was built, overlooking a landscape equally extended and picturesque. Its lofty battlements commanded an immense and magnificent prospect. Beneath flowed the beautiful Charente. Beyond stretched the vast plain on which one might trace, as on a map, the great roads to Paris, La Rochelle, and Bordeaux. On every side were verdant prairies, rich vineyards, extensive forests, out of whose billowy foliage, like islands from the sea, here and there rose the green slopes or gray cliffs of the Limousin mountains. Dispersed about the luxuriant savannas, nestling among the golden vineyards, half hid among the mountains, or voluptuously stretched along the fertile valleys, were a multitude of villages and hamlets, over which the lords of Angoumois had ruled from immemorial time, until the province became an appanage of the crown of France. In all the kingdom there was not a more engaging scene than that spread out before the old château; while to the traveller approaching by either of the great routes, the gray fortress, so proudly lifting its cluster of antique towers and turrets above the surrounding country, was an object not easily effaced from the recollection.

If possessed of sufficient imagination, he might momentarily expect to see the drawbridge come clattering down, the portcullis lifted, and a glittering cavalcade of knights, squires, and men-at-arms issue from the Gothic gate-way for some feat of arms in the personal or political interest of their suzerain. Perhaps he might regret the days of chivalry a little, the days of which the château was the living symbol, when prince and vassal fought hand to hand and foot to foot, each put

ting trust in God and his own right arm for the victory. Perchance he might heave a sigh to recall the degeneracy of war into systematic murder, the breaking of useless lances, the hanging up of shield, pennon, and harness in the castle armory, never again to be displayed except to the curious of another, an indifferent generation. The subject is full of suggestions, but we have no time to pursue them in search of a moral or a precept. We leave to our reader the pleasure, if such there be, of extracting the substance from these shadows, and of analyzing his own sensations. We have another mission to accomplish.

The château, which had certainly lost nothing of its grandeur, and, to the uninstructed eye, little of its ancient impregnable character, was the citadel and palace of Angoulême from a remote period. It was composed of a lofty and massive octagonal tower, pierced with narrow windows that looked like mere slits in the solid masonry. This was the principal tower or donjon of the fortress. The other angles were defended by round towers crowned with pointed turrets, and joined together by high walls strengthened with buttresses. The construction of portions of the château dated back to the fifteenth century, thus presenting a diversity of architecture which gave those old towers and battlements a strikingly picturesque *ensemble.* Like all mediæval fortresses, the château was surrounded by a deep moat, crossed at the great gate by a drawbridge. Passing beyond, the stranger found himself in a large court, or *place d'armes,* within the walls against which were built the stables, quarters for the soldiers, and storehouses. From being the type of feudalism under its old masters, the Château Angoulême, like *all the royal fortresses* of France, had become the expression of the personal vengeance and political hatreds of the monarch.

On the afternoon of the first day of the new year, 1695, M. Cinqbars, governor of the fortress, was forgetting in the society of two or three friends the cares of official responsibility, and the vexations which his two hundred prisoners imposed. The bottle circulated freely, and the occasion seemed to the guests an advantageous one for penetrating some of the secrets which the walls of the château so assiduously kept from the outside world. But M. Cinqbars, who was a very discreet man, continued, notwithstanding the general conviviality, to disappoint this expectation. He was only at his third bottle, and never talked of state affairs until at his fifth. At present an indiscreet question only served to put him still more on his guard; to kindle that spirit of obstinacy of which he was, we venture to affirm, the incarnation, and which could only be extinguished by the fumes of wine.

"Now, gentlemen," said the governor, after emptying his fifth and last bottle, "if it is your pleasure to accompany me on a tour of inspection, you will see some tolerably curious things, I wager; but mind, no infraction of the regulations; no talking to the prisoners; *parole d'honneur.*"

"*Parole d'honneur,*" echoed the convives, impatient for the promised exhibition to begin.

The governor called a turnkey, and the party went out. "We will first visit Jarnac," said the former. Jarnac was the great white tower which took its name from the celebrated battle-field on the route to La Rochelle. While they were crossing the court an exempt was seen in the act of placing a loaf and a jug of water before the grating of a cell situated partly under

ground: for the aperture being on a level with the pavement, the dungeon was evidently sunk in the foundations of the tower. This ordinary enough proceeding arrested the observation of the party, who soon saw an arm thrust through the bars of the grating, and a pallid face which appeared on the other side; but the prisoner, whoever he might be, had evidently recognized the governor, and, instead of removing his loaf, kept his eyes fixed on that personage until he approached within speaking distance, when, disregarding the threatening gestures of the turnkey, who angrily motioned him away from the grating, the occupant of the cell loudly exclaimed, "I crave to speak with you, Sir Governor."

The governor knew his prisoner, and, though furious at being thus accosted in the presence of witnesses, replied with .affected nonchalance, "Speak, then."

"In the name of common justice, why am I, an English prisoner of war, kept in this loathsome dungeon, with no companions except the rats with whom I have to fight for the miserable pittance of my daily food?" And the prisoner showed his hands bleeding and lacerated by these ferocious vermin. "Hear me: I have friends in England who would pay my ransom could I but find means to acquaint them with my condition. I am no criminal; why am I treated like the vilest malefactors in the château?"

"Not so loud!" replied M. Cinqbars; "not so loud, if you please. *Ventre-bleu!* Justice is not deaf, if she is blind; so you need not stun her with your complaints. Use more moderation in your demands."

"Moderation, do you say? Great God! talk of moderation to a man who *has asked the same* question a hundred *times, and has received* no answer but blows and abuse!" said the prisoner, grinding his teeth at the recollection before he went on. "If I have committed an unpardonable crime, let me be tried, condemned, and, if guilty, let me suffer the penalty. I am ready. But if there be a Christian among you, in the name of humanity I implore him to entreat the deliverance of an innocent fellow-man out of this living tomb!"

"I will advise upon it," said the governor, taking a step in advance.

"Ah," sighed the prisoner, "always the same answer!"

The party then moved. As the last was passing his grate the prisoner adroitly threw a small roll at his feet. On the impulse of the moment the visitor dropped his glove, and, in stooping to pick it up, took up also the prisoner's missile.

"*Premier Jarnac* is in one of his tantrums to-day," observed the governor, as the visitors ascended the first steps of the tower.

"Might one know of what he is accused?" asked M. Boncœur, who had picked up the roll.

"Designs against the State," replied the governor, in a tone that admitted of no further question. His companions looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders, and did not pursue the subject. To do so would have given offence to their host, M. Cinqbars.

On their return to the governor's apartment, that functionary reverted, of his own accord, to the intractable prisoner whose words and looks had so visibly disturbed his guests. Taking down a thick volume from its place on the shelf, M. Cinqbars remarked, in his most official tone, "I am not sorry to be able to show you, messieurs, the danger of swallowing without salt the fables invented by my wards. You shall see why the regulation forbidding

any communication between prisoner and visitor is altogether salutary and necessary. Now this madman, whom you heard pleading his cause like an advocate, has given me a world of trouble. Let's see," he muttered, turning over the pages of the register. "Ah, here it is. 'Order to M. Clermont de Cinqbars,'" continued the governor, reading in a voice inaudible to his listeners until he found what he wanted, "'It is our will, Monsieur le Gouverneur, that you guard this prisoner surely and strictly, and prevent his holding communication with any except his jailers, because he is a very dangerous man.' You see, gentlemen," concluded the governor, shutting the register and striking the cover with his palm, "these orders are imperative, and admit of but one construction."

"And you draw from that—?" ventured one of his listeners, timidly.

"That this is some secret of State which it would be imprudent to meddle with. 'Dangerous man!'" pursued M. Cinqbars, quoting the words of the *lettre-de-cachet;* "I should think so! At first he sulked, and refused his food. Then he demanded a companion, and, on finding he was not to be gratified—you recollect the terms of the order—knocked the turnkey down with a blow of his fist in an access of fury. Next he succeeded in removing one of the bars of his window by shaking it until the mortar became loosened; and having found he could lift it from its socket, squeezed through the opening, gained the rampart unperceived, and was lowering himself into the fosse of the château when his rope, which he had contrived out of strips of his clothing, broke, precipitating him, stunned and bleeding, to the bottom of the ditch. Dangerous! *morbleu!* if I had many *such I should be compelled* to demand my dismissal of his majesty. And now, gentlemen, a word to the wise."

"*Diable!*" ejaculated his listeners in chorus, "it is incredible."

"It is true. That man is the devil incarnate. Stay; I had forgotten. Like all prisoners, he was searched on entering the château; a gold locket was suspended to his neck, which contained the miniature of a beautiful woman. When he found it was to be taken from him—such is the regulation—he snatched a musket from one of the guards, and laid about him so tremendously that the room was cleared in an instant. They were obliged to call the main-guard to their assistance before he could be secured. One of my best men had a wrist broken in the scuffle."

His guests soon took their leave. M. Cinqbars appeared well satisfied with the impression he had made—above all upon M. Boncœur, who was his wine purveyor, and the owner of extensive vineyards in the neighboring village of Hirsac.

M. Boncœur was a good soul at bottom. He left the château a prey to the most cruel perplexity. The little roll in his pocket felt as heavy as lead. To say nothing of prison rules, was he not guilty of duplicity, of violating hospitality, in thus surreptitiously receiving it without the knowledge of his host? But what was it? They say that women are curious to indiscretion; but we must avow that a little curiosity exists also among the sterner sex. As soon as M. Boncœur was at home he went straight into his library, locked himself in, and, taking from his pocket the object of his preoccupation, found it to consist of a piece of dirty linen, on which a few illegible lines were traced by a shaking hand. They were with difficulty deciphered as follows:

"I am guilty of no crime except serving my country. These lines, written with soot on a fragment of my shirt, are the last of a score of attempts to make my wretched condition known to my friends. I ask nothing except that Sir Purbeck Temple, London, be informed of it. If you would not be guilty of my death, send him this news of his unhappy nephew. I swear, on my salvation as a Christian, that I am an innocent man. JOHN NELSON."

M. Boncœur was in a sore dilemma. On one side, his humane impulses urged compliance with the prisoner's prayers. On the other, self-interest, fear of discovery, tugged hard at his selfish nature. After debating the matter inwardly without arriving at a decision, he determined to consult one whom he knew he might trust without reserve, and whose shrewd woman's wit had often stood him in good stead. This was no other than his daughter, for M. Boncœur was a widower, and Marie, his only child, the mistress of his house. To her he related the scene at the château, and ended by putting Nelson's scroll in her hands. Marie listened attentively. She was at no loss to perceive her father's difficulty, and when he renewed the conversation had taken her resolution. "You see how it is," said he at last, worried by the necessity of making a decision; "shall we put our heads together upon it?"

"So that you may lose yours? not for worlds!"

"But I haven't the heart to send the poor devil's letter back to the château. What a fool I was to pick it up!"

"I am not so sure of that; I have a presentiment that it will turn out differently."

"What is to be done?"

"Leave it to me, sir; we women do not stop to think: we have our instincts, and we act."

"But—"

"*Don't ask any* questions. I require *full and entire* control of the affair. If I can save this unhappy man's life, the action will be its own sufficient reward. If I fail—well, you will not have been compromised, and the other will be no worse off than before."

"Be it so; but how do you—"

Marie playfully put her hand over her father's mouth. "Remember, sir, you are to know nothing, absolutely nothing."

"Take care, girl! this is a dangerous game: you had best advise with me."

"Oh, sir," pleaded Marie, "in all my life I have never done one self-sacrificing act. Do not deny me the risk, the happiness of saving a fellow-creature's life. I must do it: there!"

"Have your way, then, my dear," said Père Boncœur, whom his daughter's manner visibly impressed; "have your way, and success attend you."

In M. Boncœur's household was an old servant, who entertained for his young mistress a species of sentimental admiration bordering on worship. Though a devout Catholic, he would sooner have fallen on his knees to her than before the image of the Virgin which decorated the high altar in the cathedral of Angoulême. This old servitor, Lafitte by name, had in his younger days been a *contrebandier;* one of a gang whose rendezvous at the Isle de Rhé the authorities of La Rochelle had never succeeded in wholly breaking up. Lafitte, arrested and condemned to the galleys, had been pardoned, or rather ransomed, at the intercession of the young Marie's mother. We now see the motive of his affection for the daughter.

Marie held a lengthened and secret interview with Lafitte, the result of which was that he set out at daybreak for La Rochelle without saying a word to his fellow-servants on the subject of his errand. At the end

of two days he dismounted from his mule at his master's door, replying to the shower of questions which assailed him in the servants' hall with three words, "Service of mademoiselle." More could not be extracted from him. Later in the day, when in his customary place behind his master's chair, an intelligent look gave his mistress to understand that his mission had been successful.

"By-the-way, Lafitte," said his master, as if for the first time struck by the circumstance, "where have you been these two days past?"

"Service of mademoiselle," responded Lafitte, sententiously.

Thanks to his intimate knowledge of the habits and haunts of his old associates, their passwords and grips, Lafitte had been able to secure what he wanted. The captain of a lugger was on the point of sailing with a cargo of cognac and religious refugees, which he hoped to land on the English coast without accident. A liberal reward, and a hint that the service was in the interest of some high personage, easily induced the smuggler to undertake that the packet placed in his hands by Lafitte should be forwarded to its destination through the mysterious but thoroughly organized channels known only to the free-traders or their agents. We have seen that he fulfilled his promise.

Meanwhile Nelson remained profoundly ignorant of the fate of his missive. One of the governor's companions had picked it up and put it in his pocket, doubtless to be handed to the governor, and be by him consigned to the flames like the others. What could have become of the score or more letters he had written to the minister, to merchants of Rochelle, and even to the king *himself*? Poor fellow! *he did not know* that not one had left the château; but, on the other hand, he did not know that a woman, brave, intelligent, determined, had become interested in his fortunes. He only knew that every resource had been tried that poor human ingenuity could devise, and that all had failed—utterly, miserably, failed.

The dungeon in which Nelson was confined was one of those reserved for the worst or most dangerous criminals. There was no other floor than the damp earth, no other light than that admitted through the grated bull's-eye. The air was infected with stinking odors, the walls streaked with moisture. A squared stone block, having an iron ring fixed in one side, served ordinarily as a seat, to which the prisoner, if refractory, might be chained. Three similar blocks, placed one upon the other so as to form a column six feet high, were furnished with ponderous chains, having a broad iron collar at each end, to be attached to the prisoner's neck, his waist, his wrists, and his ankles. Heavy weights were then fastened to the prisoner's wrists and ankles in order to prevent a change of posture. If he sat on his block, the weights prevented him from rising to his feet; to stand erect was impossible. In this attitude Nelson had passed some six weeks, on his entrance to the château, as a punishment for his desperate encounter with his guards. Everything was contrived with devilish ingenuity to break the spirit and destroy the health of the miserable victim. A few weeks, with the prison regimen, usually sufficed for both. The cell was about ten feet broad and eight high, with an arched roof of cut stone.

Two years in this hideous cavern had made sad havoc with Nelson's outward man. His dark locks were turned as white as snow; his eyes

deeply sunken in two black cavities, at the bottom of which they burned with unnatural brilliancy. His complexion was the color of old parchment; his face partly covered with a grizzled beard, somewhat concealing the hollow cheeks. Deep furrows crossed his forehead. His clothes hung about him in rags, and his whole appearance but too plainly bespoke enforced and long-continued neglect. Boncœur had told his daughter he had seen an old man whose white hairs and piteous accents had deeply moved his sympathies. Marie had imagined an aged prisoner with one foot in the grave.

The prisoner sat, or rather crouched, in a corner of his dungeon in the abandonment of despair. We know that hope is not easily extinguished, but Nelson felt the last spark flickering in his breast. For two years he had dragged on a miserable existence, sustained by the hope of deliverance. His bodily strength was gone; his elastic courage, his reliance in human justice, mercy, or pity. "I am a man predestined to misfortune; of what use to struggle longer?" thought he. Should he dash his head against the wall, and so end his sufferings; or attempt to strangle his keeper, and seek death at the hands of his guards? Apparently there was no way out of prison for his body: should they longer imprison his soul?

While balancing these dread alternatives, vague hallucinations began to possess his mind; the instinct of self-preservation gave way to an overmastering desire to escape from his tormentors by the only way still open. Struggling, wavering, on the verge of frenzy, he was disturbed by a noise in the chamber overhead like that caused by dragging some heavy body across the floor. He raised his head and listened. Soon the noise ceased; he heard the heavy bolts shot in the locks, and the shuffling of retreating footsteps. Then all was still.

The prisoner slowly mounted the three steps which led to his window. No one was in the court-yard except the sentinel before the *corps de garde*. He then descended, crossed to the opposite side of his cell, and dropped on his knees before the wall. The thin wedge of light driven into the darkness did not penetrate far enough to enable the sharpest eyes to discern the outline of an old chimney which had been long closed up; for such comforts as a fire, even in winter, were unheard of in the *oubliettes* of the château. Nelson cautiously removed a brick and put his ear to the aperture. Hearing nothing, he struck three blows upon the wall, and waited. After a moment's delay a suppressed voice came from above: "Is it you, captain?" it said, very cautiously.

"Yes; but I was afraid they had put you in another cell. What was the noise I heard just now?"

There was a moment's hesitation before the voice above replied: "You were only half wrong: one of us was being removed to another cell."

"Speak plainly. Where have they taken him?"

"To the morgue: to-night to the fosse of the château."

"Dead?"

"Dead."

"Thank God for it!"

"Amen! amen!"

"How was he at the last?"

"He seemed rather restless the first half of the night; then grew incoherent; called his wife and children by name, but did not seem sensible of my presence." Here the narrator abruptly paused.

"Did he not know you?" questioned Nelson.

"No; he did not seem to know my voice, though I constantly tried to make him recognize me. About two in the morning he raised himself up on one elbow, and said, in a voice of startling distinctness, 'Count Frontenac, the justice you denied me I go to demand before a more august tribunal. I charge you meet me there!'"

"Hist!" said Nelson, "I hear footsteps." He quickly replaced the tile and had resumed his old attitude, when the steps approached his grate. It proved to be the turnkey, with his customary allowance. Having deposited the jug and loaf within the prisoner's reach, the assistant significantly touched the loaf, saying,

"*Tiens, Anglais,* you complained of the bread the last time."

"Christians would not give such to swine: but what does it matter?"

"Nothing; only I hope you will find it to your better liking to-day."

"Find it better to-day," echoed Nelson. What did he mean by that? this man, one of the most brutal of his jailers, who had seldom vouchsafed a word of reply to his complaints or his entreaties. He took the loaf, and was about to put it down untouched—for the dialogue to which we have listened had destroyed the little appetite he felt before—when the thought struck him that the jailer's words might have more meaning than was apparent on the surface. He therefore broke the loaf, and was rewarded by finding a folded paper on the inside. With trembling hands he opened it and read the following, written in a woman's delicate hand:

"Your prayers have been heard: your letter is on its way. For the sake of those who risk so much to befriend a stranger, patience, courage, and discretion the most absolute. Destroy this on the instant."

Nelson read the paper three times before he took his eyes from it. He crumpled it in his hand, and seemed at first inclined to disobey the warning to destroy it; but at last he put the precious scroll in his mouth, chewed it to a pulp, and swallowed it. It was the sweetest morsel he had tasted for two years.

At the time this was transpiring in Nelson's cell, the governor was completing the following entry in his register:

"*Edouard Tyne, dites colonel, prisonnier Anglais, mort cet troisième Fevrier,* 1695, *de la fièvre du pays.*"

The dead man's comrade had already written on the wall of his chamber with the charred end of a stick, "*Memento mori.* Colonel Edward Tyng, late of Boston, in New England, *æt.* 68, died 3d Jan., 1695, of ill-treatment, starvation, and home-sickness in this dungeon." The turnkey effaced the inscription, although he could not read a word of it, with a warning to the writer that a second offence would be worth a month's solitary confinement in a *cachot.* This is why only the false mortuary certificate, drawn up by M. Cinqbars, has been preserved.

It was not until toward the end of April that any new circumstance interrupted the painful monotony of Nelson's life. His anxiety to know the fate of his letter had become insupportable. In vain he tried to intercept a ray of intelligence from his keeper's eye, or extract a syllable from those sphinx-like lips. A reference to the affair of the loaf had indeed induced him to open those lips, in order to declare he did not know what the prisoner was talking about, and to tap his forehead significantly with his fore-finger. Absolutely nothing was to be learned from that source.

We do not know why the moment of success is often preceded by the greatest despondency, but thus it is. When we perceive ourselves near the summit of our hopes, and a few vigorous steps will enable us to reach the goal, there always comes the feeling of mental prostration to dissuade us from taking those steps; we fear the task is beyond our strength; we hesitate, and are overcome by imaginary difficulties. Where the obstacles are really insurmountable, we press forward with elastic tread; when they are nearly surmounted, we falter, courage abandons us, and we yield at last to a paralyzing stupor like the nightmare of our dreams, in which the mind refuses to act, the will to command, the body to obey.

It was from this total abasement that the prisoner was one day aroused by the ringing noise made by the butts of muskets and the iron of halberds on the flagstones, and the turning of the key in the lock of the outer door. The inner door, which was separated from the outer by the whole thickness of the walls of the tower, was then swung back on its hinges, and the figure of M. Cinqbars appeared at the top of the five or six steps conducting to the level of the dungeon. At this unexpected apparition Nelson stupidly stared. During his two years' incarceration he had never seen the governor except when crossing the court-yard on his visits of ceremony. What new misfortune threatened?

"*Salut, monsieur,*" began M. Cinqbars, suavely. "Without doubt you are surprised to see me; nevertheless I should be welcome, for I bring good news."

"Your news is welcome, sir," said Nelson, trembling in every limb.

"*But not the bearer,* eh?" said the governor, smiling sardonically.

"M. Cinqbars should be at home here," replied the prisoner.

"*Diable, monsieur,* how you twist your words! a truce to such compliments. Attend: I have the king's order to lodge you after a somewhat better fashion, and to make known that he has been graciously pleased to admit you to ransom."

"Ransom! I?" faltered the prisoner, his faculties completely disordered by what he heard.

"*Pardieu!* Nothing else, since it is I who tell you so."

A flash of light illuminated Nelson's pale face, followed as quickly by a cloud. "How obtain ransom, when I have no friends nearer than England to advance the money?"

"That is your affair. *Voyons,*" said M. Cinqbars, reflecting, "perhaps some merchants of Rochelle might be induced to assist you."

"'Tis useless. I have already applied to several, whom I knew by name, but have received no reply."

"That is strange," observed the governor, stroking his imperial; "perhaps another time you might be more fortunate. But come, sir, follow La Furet to your new apartment."

"I pray you, give me a few moments to collect myself. I am so weak, monsieur, so very weak!" Nelson leaned against the wall for support.

The governor acceded, though with evident surprise. "As you will," he said, turning to go. "La Furet, return in half an hour and conduct monsieur."

"One word," interposed Nelson: "is it permitted to communicate outside the château?"

"As to that, I have already told you so — on the subject of ransom; nothing else," responded M. Cinqbars.

"At what sum is my ransom fixed?"

"At fifteen thousand livres."

"Fifteen thousand livres!" echoed Nelson, thunderstruck.

"Not a sou less. They esteem you highly, monsieur, it appears."

"Fifteen thousand livres!" repeated Nelson, in dismay.

As soon as the door was barred and the hollow tread in the corridor had died away, the prisoner tottered to his chimney and gave the signal, which was answered from above. In a few incoherent words Nelson made known the substance of his interview with the governor. "See, now," he concluded; "this morning I was ready to curse the world and die. This is my punishment."

There was a moment's silence before the voice above replied, "For you there is indeed hope; but for me—"

"Halt there, John Alden. When I leave the château you will leave it."

"God bless you! I have no other hope but in you."

"And that will not fail while I live. Once more, I will never leave Angoulême alone. Shall I swear it?"

"No; your word is more than sufficient for me."

"Farewell, then, dear friend," said Nelson, closing the opening which had been the sole alleviation of those cruel years. La Furet reappeared with a flask of wine, which the governor had sent. "Drink that; it will put you on your legs again," said La Furet, offering the flask. Nelson swallowed a few mouthfuls, but, in the condition of nervous exhaustion in which he found himself, the wine only increased his physical weakness. "Come, then," said the turnkey, "mount on my back;" and with the prisoner's thin arms clasped around his neck and the emaciated legs tucked under his sinewy arms, La Furet ascended with heavy tread the winding staircase of the tower.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RANSOM, AND HOW IT WAS OBTAINED.

Our readers will have no difficulty in establishing the connection between Nelson's letter, the demand of the English minister concerning him, and the relaxation of the rigorous treatment he had hitherto experienced at the hands of his masters. He had exchanged his dungeon for an upper chamber of the tower, which, though still a prison, was a palace by comparison. Here he had pure air; his chamber was dry, and his narrow window overlooked the course of the sparkling Charente. This melioration of his surroundings soon operated a favorable change in the mental and physical condition of the man. Divested of his filthy rags, provided with wholesome food, his self-respect began to return with the improvement in his personal appearance; he began to look and feel like a gentleman once more. But in this case the amendment was painfully slow. As his despair had been extreme, so his recovery progressed by imperceptible degrees; still, it did progress. The tide had ebbed so far out that he was himself scarcely conscious of the turning, though turned it was, at last, and steadily rising higher.

The Boncœurs, father and daughter, watched with keen interest the result of their efforts in behalf of the prisoner of the château. His improved treatment was for them the evidence that he had spoken truly; that his friends were not only active but powerful. What other motives could thus suddenly have appealed to the humanity of M. Cinqbars? The governor had indeed intimated as much during his purveyor's last visit, and had even gone so far as to hazard the opinion that he should soon lose the society of

one of his large and troublesome family. His regret was clearly not counterfeited, since the prisoner had been, by direction of M. de Ponchartrain, put upon a tariff of forty livres a day, or only ten less than M. Cinqbars estimated the value of a prince of the blood. The governor also spoke freely of the exorbitant ransom demanded, as a hopeful sign that his prisoner might not elude his guardianship so soon, after all. The parties settled their accounts, and M. Cinqbars, who drove a lucrative traffic from the sale of wine to his prisoners, which was one of the perquisites of his place, received the customary hamper of Burgundy for his quittance. M. Boncœur immediately related the whole conversation to Marie, word for word.

Marie Boncœur, being fully satisfied that the prisoner was what he represented himself, redoubled her efforts in his behalf. Another bribe induced La Furet to open his mouth sufficiently to say, in Nelson's hearing, "Were I in your place, I would demand speech of M. Boncœur."

"And who is this M. Boncœur?" asked Nelson.

"Richest man in Angoulême; wine-purveyor to the château: benevolent too, they say. Try him."

"I will. Acquaint the governor that I desire permission to speak with M. Boncœur on the subject of my ransom."

La Furet put his finger on his lips, grinned, and went out. The interview, being arranged for the following day, took place in M. Cinqbar's private office, in the presence of that official. M. Boncœur's surprise was extreme at seeing a man shaven, combed, and dressed in decent garments, enter the room and salute himself and the governor with the ease and breeding of a man of the world. In fact, the whiteness of Nelson's hair not only gave him a certain distinction, but added a peculiar charm, a dignified grace to his striking features. But still this young, old man was not the person the worthy Boncœur had prepared himself to meet. We repeat, his astonishment was extreme.

The interview was rather formal, the presence of M. Cinqbars proving a check upon the secret impulses of Nelson and Boncœur — of the former to more fully explain himself; the latter, to hear what he felt certain must be a strangely eventful history. Nelson, however, gave the names of certain merchants of Rochelle, to whom he had formerly been known, limiting his demands to the hope that they would advance the sum upon bills to be drawn upon his uncle.

"Stop a bit," observed Cinqbars. "To facilitate matters, I will let you know the precise tenor of an order received the day before yesterday." He pulled out the drawer of a secretary and took from it a folded paper, which read as follows:

"Versailles, 13th July, 1695.

"The king is willing to permit M. Nelson to pass into England in order to arrange for the ransom lately spoken of in conjunction with the late Colonel Tyng and John Alden. The governor of the Château Angoulême is ordered to send the said Nelson, after paying, or securing the payment of fifteen thousand livres, to Paris, in order for his transfer to England for the purpose named." [This paper, besides bearing the minister's signature, had the following endorsement:] "Seen and approved. LOUIS."

"This is a large sum," observed M. Boncœur, after listening to the reading of the order. "I do not know that I can undertake the affair: still, am not indisposed to render what assistance I may. Suppose now you should fail to obtain the repayment of all this money in England; understand, I do not say

such a thing is likely to happen; but it is possible. What then? What is your security?"

"My word of honor, to return to France and put myself in the hands of my bondsmen."

M. Boncœur's eyes encountered those of M. Cinqbars. The look said as plainly as words, "A fine security that, *ma foi!*" Nelson intercepted the look, and immediately added, "It is all I have to offer, but it is a pledge that has never been dishonored." M. Boncœur promised, without compromising himself personally, to do his best, and went home, thinking the chances of the prisoner's liberation very slight indeed. "Was there ever such a proposal! Fifteen thousand livres in exchange for the word of a stranger! *Corbleu!* The coolness of these islanders surpasses anything I ever heard of. Preposterous! preposterous!" were Boncœur's muttered ejaculations, from time to time, while on his way home.

But to Marie Boncœur the security which her father so summarily pooh-poohed and shrugged out of sight, seemed good and sufficient. She had made up her mind that this man should be free, and when her father had exhausted his catalogue of objections, mildly but firmly announced her intention of ransoming him, cost what it might. If her father refused to furnish the money, be it so; she would apply to her rich uncle, the Bishop of Saintes. If all other means failed, she would pledge her own and her mother's jewels to the Jews of Rochelle. Boncœur knew Marie was one of those soft yet inflexible characters who develop, at need, an unexpected power of resistance; who, having once formed a settled purpose, neither argument, cajolery, nor threats *can* make relinquish *it; who do not admit* the word "impossible" to their vocabulary, or, rather, they regard it as a cowardly word convenient for those who seek a pretext to abandon a cause, a friend, or a purpose. Thus the old gentleman felt little faith in his ability to shake her purpose: nevertheless he prepared, with a show of confidence he was far from feeling, to measure his will with that of his beautiful antagonist. But she was armed in a righteous cause; her conscience approved, and she felt herself invulnerable.

"Is it possible! all this for a stranger, a heretic, and an enemy! Absurd! You shall not commit such folly!" cried Boncœur.

"Then I must apply to my uncle."

"Eh! I know well enough what his answer will be."

"And what will it be, father?"

"That you have lost your senses, foolish child. Odd's life, girl! have you considered the scandal, the ridicule, to say nothing of the loss of a good round sum in case this stranger proves faithless?"

"I have, and I will take the risk."

"But we have already risked enough in putting the man in communication with his friends. Let them manage the affair."

"And leave a good action half performed! What has changed you so, *mon père?* You seemed prepossessed in this miserable man's favor. Why desert him now, when we may help him without danger to ourselves?"

Boncœur was getting impatient, and Marie a little nervous. "Let him find his ransom where he may," said the former; "I wash my hands of the affair."

"I trust, sir, my uncle will answer differently," said Marie, petulantly.

"Do you mean to say that you will apply to him contrary to my wishes?"

"But you have not forbidden me.

Why should you, if monseigneur is willing to risk his pistoles? *Il est cousu d'ecus.*"

"Which he lends only upon good and valuable security. He is no child, this good bishop, when it comes to money matters. He will refuse."

"You will permit me, then, to try?"

"H'm, 'twill be time lost. Give over your design. I know what I say. The bishop will give you his blessing, but his pistoles—bah!"

"But he loves me tenderly; and when I tell him how my heart is set upon freeing this stranger, he will not button his pockets all the more tightly."

"Say like your father, and your appeal will be all the stronger, perhaps," said Boncœur, working himself into a passion at the thought of being called stingy by his own daughter.

"Father!"

"Mademoiselle!"

"Forgive me, sir; but persuaded that I am to be the humble instrument of saving this man, I have begged of you this miserable money—for what is it, after all, in comparison with a life? —but since you refuse, let us say no more about it. When I tell monseigneur it is a claim on Marie Boncœur's gratitude forever, he will not hesitate."

Boncœur's resistance could go no further.

"Halloo there, Lafitte! where the devil are you skulking?" cried he, ringing the bell furiously, and then throwing it at the white head which appeared in the door-way.

"At monsieur's orders," said Lafitte, coolly dodging the missile.

Boncœur flung himself into a chair, snatched up a pen, and dashed off two or three lines. He then folded the paper, and having pushed it toward his daughter with a look about equally made up of anger, jealousy, and tenderness, "*Tiens*, Lafitte," he cried, "get thy beast, and ride as if the devil was *en croupe* behind: this to its address. Stay; don't forget your pistols."

"But there is no address," said Lafitte, staring at the paper which Marie handed him.

"Goldsmiths' Arms, imbecile, Saintonge, Chaudenier, et Cie. You will receive a bag containing fifteen hundred pistoles. If you are not back by sunset to-morrow I will have you flayed alive. Off with you!"

Lafitte stole a look at Marie, before he went out by one door while his master left the room by another. The latter's progress might easily be traced by the slamming of doors as far as the garden, where, finding the gardener stooping over a bed, he saluted him with a kick which sent that worthy sprawling among his roses, while his master marched on, switching off with his cane the flowers that playfully nodded to him from both sides of the path, as if saying, "Eh, see what a rage that poor Boncœur is in; the girl was too much for him, poor, dear man."

"*Sur ma vie*," ejaculated Boncœur, lopping off the heads of half a dozen roses at a single sweep of his cruel weapon—"*sur ma vie*, I am not a bad father, but I am the slave of that girl's caprices, and to-day the biggest ass in Angoumois. Fifteen hundred pistoles gone to the devil with a scratch of the pen! Zounds! Boncœur, *mon ami*, you need a guardian."

"The master was getting warmed up; I wonder what it is all about?" mused Lafitte while saddling his mule. "Stop a bit," he added, "I have forgotten my pistols."

"The money is mine!" said Marie, shedding tears of joy while watching Lafitte's progress down the mountain.

"Happiness may sometimes be purchased, then," she sighed.

Boncœur's passion evaporated. It was time. He had completely demolished the garden. The necessary formalities were complied with, the ransom being lodged with the prefect of Angoumois. Boncœur had also succeeded in obtaining on Nelson's bills the twelve hundred livres at which Alden was priced. "Now, father," said Marie Boncœur, "I would like to see the man, if you please."

The consent of M. Cinqbars was obtained; and one afternoon, when the more favored prisoners were taking an airing in the court-yard, Nelson was summoned into the little office, which he had not entered since he did so for the purpose of being registered as an inmate of the château. He found himself in the presence of the governor and of two other persons, one of whom was a lady, closely veiled.

"Monsieur," began M. Cinqbars, "I have sent for you to announce the definite arrangement of your affair. This evening, at dusk, you and your friend set out for Paris, if that is agreeable to you." Nelson bowed without speaking, but his chest expanded and his eye sparkled.

"Nothing remains, then, but for you to thank the persons to whom you owe your restoration to liberty," said the governor, indicating M. Boncœur and the unknown lady. "I congratulate you, sir, upon this happy conclusion of your experience as my prisoner."

Again Nelson bowed. "I will not dissemble, sir; I shall leave the château without regret." Then turning to Boncœur, he said, in a voice tremulous with emotion, "To you, sir, I owe everything."

"To me?" rejoined Boncœur, shaking his head. "Monsieur mistakes; *to me he owes nothing.*"

Nelson looked from one to the other for an explanation. Surely M. Cinqbars was not trifling with him. The governor smiled as he said, "Monsieur Boncœur is too upright to claim what does not belong to him. It is to this lady you must pay the debt not only of gratitude, but of money. Thank God and your own good-fortune, that have raised up such friends in the hour of need."

"I do! I do!" cried Nelson, breaking through all restraint. "Oh, madame, you do not know what you have done. You have given me my life, raised me from misery and despair, restored my trust in the goodness of God and the justice of my fellow-man: you have, indeed, madame. It is not only a fellow-being you have saved, but a soul trembling on the brink of perdition; for if help had not come—God forgive me!—I meditated escaping by the only way left a desperate man. Thanks, madame!" said Nelson, tears streaming down his cheeks, his voice breaking. "I lay the gratitude of a lifetime at your feet; and what the blessings, the prayers of so poor a man as I may avail shall not be wanting. The debt of honor I shall pay, but that of gratitude never, madame, on this earth—never."

M. Cinqbars coughed to conceal his embarrassment; Boncœur bit his tongue to hide his; Marie was crying with joy. She had not been deceived; the man was worthy; but so different from what she had expected!

"Sir," she said, in her low, rich voice, "believe me, we are happy in being the instruments of preserving a life so precious as yours must be to some aching hearts in your far-off country. Go, sir, to those who are watching for your coming, but do not forget that you stand engaged to Marie Boncœur for your liberty."

"And I," cried Nelson, "dare not accept my liberty unless you put faith in me."

"You have the proof that we do, monsieur," answered Marie.

"Without reserve?"

"Implicitly."

"May I not see the face of my benefactress?"

"To what end, sir?" said Marie, in some confusion at this unforeseen request, for she wished to guard her incognito.

"Raise your veil, Marie," said her father.

The young girl obeyed. It was a matchless face, calm, spiritual, earnest, where passion had left no traces; the face of a Madonna, illumined by a high and noble purpose. For a moment her eyes met those of Nelson, then she modestly dropped her veil.

"Adieu, monsieur," said Boncœur, grasping Nelson's hand; "and if you ever return to France, remember André Boncœur."

"Adieu, sir," added Marie, offering her hand.

Nelson felt that she left something within his own before releasing hers. His fingers closed upon it mechanically, he murmured an incoherent adieu, and quitted the governor's office more agitated by the interview than he had believed possible. Once alone, he examined the object he had just received from those soft fingers, and found it to be his long-lost locket. Marie had, with womanly delicacy, guessed the prisoner's interest in the fair English face of the miniature, and had begged the privilege of returning it to its owner. While Nelson contemplated it he heard the sound of wheels in the court, and ran to the window in time to see a carriage roll away from the *château.* "*That,*" said he, putting the *locket in his pocket,* "is the kind of woman a man dies for." He then turned, silent and abstracted, from the window. Which did he mean—the woman of the miniature or the woman of the carriage?

The same evening Nelson and Alden left the château. A mounted guardsman rode on each side of the coach, and two others trotted behind it. They stopped only for fresh relays of horses, and by daybreak were twenty leagues from Angoulême. On the fourth day they reached Orleans, and on the fifth at twilight were halted at the Barrière St. Antoine. After being closely inspected by the sergeant of the guard, who scrutinized the prisoners through its barred windows, the carriage turned sharply to the left between high walls, crossed an open space, then a drawbridge, where a sentinel was posted, and rolled into a paved court with a long range of buildings on the right. Here the carriage stopped. One of the guards dismounted and let down the steps. "Descend, gentlemen," he said; "we are arrived."

Nelson and his companion followed their guide into the building. As they passed under the lamp which hung above the entrance-door, Nelson's quick glance noted the glitter of arms and the presence of several spectral figures marching slowly up and down in the dusk. The travellers were immediately ushered into an apartment plainly furnished, where a man was seated at a table writing, who looked up from his paper on the entrance of his visitors, gazing first at one and then at the other, as if he would thus read the history of their lives, master their secret thoughts, or quell any impulse of an independent will by a look. While he was perusing the letter which Nelson's guardian, with a low reverence, presented, the two Englishmen returned

the scrutiny with interest. "The Evil Eye!" muttered Alden. Nelson nodded.

The individual in question was a homely little man, with a face like creased old vellum, straight black hair, serpent's eyes, bloodless lips, nose like a hawk's beak, and a little gray stubble on his under lip. But his most remarkable feature was the eye. We have compared it with that of a serpent, which first fascinates, and finally paralyzes its victim. Instead of burning, it froze, and instead of possessing depth, it emitted a cold gleam like that reflected from a polished mirror, dazzling and bewildering him who comes within its focus. The person was richly dressed in black velvet, and wore the cross of Saint Louis, suspended by its blue ribbon, around his neck.

Nelson's first thought was that he had been brought to the prefecture, and that, after certain formalities, both he and his companion would be permitted to shift for themselves. But he had reckoned without his host. When he started for the door to request the coachman to wait his orders, the soldier who stood motionless behind them put himself in his path. "Wait a little," said the little man, with an imperious gesture; "I shall not long detain you."

"I only wished to notify the coachman," observed Nelson, surprised at this proceeding.

"He has his orders," was the brief reply. The prisoners were then required to give their names, ages, condition, and nationality. Nelson began to grow impatient at these formalities, which were too much like those to which he had submitted on first entering the Château Angoulême. "Never mind, I shall soon be rid of this annoying espionage," he muttered. "You *find everything regular*, I hope, sir," he said aloud. "We are greatly fatigued with the speed of our journey hither, and would seek some rest at your good pleasure."

The official made no other reply than by a look which would have silenced a less bold questioner.

"Sir," repeated Nelson, in a louder key, "I had the honor to ask you a question."

"Sir," rejoined the man with the decoration, "we do not answer questions here: we put them, and others answer."

"Nevertheless, *M. le Préfet.*"

"*M. le Préfet!* don't *M. le Préfet* me, sir!"

"At least," insisted Nelson, with emphasis on the word, "whom have I the *honor* of addressing?"

"What is that to you?"

"*Grand merci.*"

"For what?"

"Your civility."

"The fiend take your impudence! See here, young man: you would know who I am? You shall. I am called De Saint Mars: this is the Bastile. *Hola!* without there!" he cried, striking a bell. A soldier put his head in at the door. "Call the major," commanded Saint Mars.

Nelson was confounded. "In the Bastile! It was a snare, then; and I am a lost man!" he stammered, with white lips.

"You don't seem overjoyed at the information," said the governor, with a brutal laugh.

"I suppose that we are to consider ourselves still prisoners, then?" asked Alden.

"*Pardieu!*" ejaculated Saint Mars.

The major made his appearance almost instantly. After receiving the orders of his superior, he requested Nelson to follow him. Alden would also have followed his friend, but was

given to understand that he must remain where he was. The officer motioned for Nelson to get into the coach, and then got in after him and pulled the strap. The carriage had proceeded a short distance only when it was stopped by a sentinel, who, after receiving the countersign from the officer, allowed it to pass. The hollow sound of the horses' hoofs told Nelson that the coach was crossing a drawbridge. It then stopped again; a subaltern appeared at the door and received a paper from the major. Having read it by the light of a lantern, he gave the order to proceed. The loud creaking of great gates being swung back on ponderous hinges, the passage of the coach under an arched and sculptured gate-way, at the extremity of which was a guard-room filled with soldiers, was followed by the sudden stoppage of the vehicle. "Here we are," said the major, opening the door and jumping briskly out.

Nelson found himself in a large court enclosed on all sides by high and gloomy towers almost excluding the light of heaven. A chill came over him, but he made no remark.

Nelson was shut up in the second chamber of the *tour de la Chapelle*—the same that had been successively occupied by the Duc de Biron, De Bassomplerre, and the Prince de Rohan. The chamber was octagonal, and sufficiently roomy, being ten paces broad and about twelve feet high. The ceiling was formed of great beams scarcely hewn into shape, festooned with cobwebs. It was necessary to mount some steps to look out of the window between bars as thick as a man's arm. From this window Nelson could see a large part of the garden of the Bastile, and the houses of the Faubourg St. Antoine, beyond the walls. Here he remained, profoundly ignorant of the intentions of his jailers or the fate of his companion. Apparently his progress toward freedom was limited to an exchange of prisons. It was difficult to convince himself that he had crossed the fatal drawbridge of the Bastile—that redoubted fortress, the name of which struck terror to the greatest and most powerful personages of the kingdom; but a look around his cell—at the massive, iron-bound doors studded with big nails—the six feet of solid walls—at the window, with its triple grating—recalled him painfully to the certainty. There was no room for doubt.

Although kept close prisoner, Nelson's condition was a little more tolerable than in the Château Angoulême. There was a system, a discipline, which showed the direction of a master-mind even in the minutest details. From his window, where much of his time was spent, the prisoner could count the different reliefs going their rounds, and see the sentinels pacing on the summit of the high walls. He estimated the garrison at about two hundred men; but he did not then know that it had been augmented, the precautions multiplied, the vigilance redoubled, since the arrival of Saint Mars with a mysterious prisoner, who had been introduced into the fortress with the greatest secrecy, even the guards and turnkeys being ordered to turn their backs in order that they might not recognize either the figure or noble presence of the new-comer. It was as jailer of this personage that Saint Mars had been made chevalier of the king's orders. He waited on him himself, showing him always the utmost respect—this man whom the least contradiction sufficed to put in a towering passion and let loose upon the offender a torrent of blasphemy.

On certain days Nelson had the

privilege of walking in the garden, which was reached by a long gallery opening between the towers *du Trésor* and *de la Comté*, and crossing the moat to the *enceinte*, whence steps descended to the garden. Here, outside the walls of the fortress, he could measure the height of its eight towers, connected by walls of the same elevation. He was even allowed to converse with other of the prisoners—a keeper being always within ear-shot—from whom he learned many particulars besides those we have related. He was also allowed books and writing materials.

From the moment he found himself possessed of pen, ink, and paper, Nelson had not ceased to make formal application to the minister to be set at liberty. Notwithstanding he perceived that he was placed on a footing with the more favored prisoners, he was devoured by mortal impatience. Never had freedom seemed so desirable as since he had been permitted to taste it only to have it so cruelly snatched from him. Why did the French Court refuse to fulfil their engagements? What new complication had arisen? In vain he ransacked his brain: he could not solve the enigma.

Nelson had spent many weeks in futile attempts to obtain a hearing, when he was one day visited by two gentlemen, who announced that they came on the part of the minister. After a long interview, in which Nelson reclaimed his liberty as the fulfilment of a solemn engagement, every condition of which he had loyally complied with, he learned that his detention in the Bastile was at the instance of the Canada Company of Merchants, who had filled the king's ears with objections, and had presented quires of memoirs to the minister on the same subject. *All these representations* were to the same effect, viz., the danger that threatened his majesty's interests in New France, were this implacable enemy set at liberty.

The king had imagined a way out of the difficulty by loading the promised release with conditions whose execution he confidently assumed were impossible. The old, forgotten affair of Port Royal was raked up from the rubbish of the minister's closet to assume a new importance. Nelson was required to engage his honor to obtain the release of those soldiers, or himself return to France and give himself up. Other and even more onerous conditions were insisted upon; it was no longer a question of ransom, but of forfeiture and disgrace, that stared Nelson in the face. With a heavy heart he undertook the performance of all the stipulations.

But even here, when his own affairs were little less desperate than before his transfer to the Bastile, Nelson could not and did not forget his country. He besought the interest of the negotiators, who had the minister's ear, to present to the French Court his idea of a convention of neutrality between the governors of New England and New France. In glowing colors he set forth the advantages of peace to both colonies, the wretched state into which they were plunged by savage inroads, the positive futility of continued hostilities between them. For his own part, he engaged to obtain the consent of the Court of London to his plan.

"Your man is a genius of the first order; but he is ignorant that we have gained important advantages over the English in those parts, which dispose his majesty not to listen to the proposal. For the present his scheme is impossible. At the same time, messieurs, you are to let him know the

the king, swayed by a point of honor, offers no further objection to his departure for England. The order," concluded M. de Ponchartrain, "will be sent to Saint Mars to-morrow." The next day Nelson left the chamber, the very atmosphere of which seemed to stifle him; and after a repetition of the formalities so scrupulously observed on his admission, passed through the gate of the fortress, armed with a safe-conduct, and accompanied by a lieutenant and two soldiers, who were to conduct him to Havre de Grace. They were ordered not to lose sight of the prisoner for a moment.

At the end of ten days Nelson had the happiness of standing on the deck of an English flag of truce, and of hearing, for the first time in four years, his own language freely spoken. Two days after he landed on the quay at Weymouth, and with a feeling of inexpressible joy stamped his foot upon English ground.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN AUDIENCE AT WHITEHALL.

Four days after landing, Nelson entered London. He was received by his uncle like one risen from the dead. This was hardly surprising, for Nelson himself began to look back upon the period of his prison life as wholly irreconcilable with his present condition even of limited freedom. He had eaten, drank, woke, or slept, when and how he pleased: was it a dream, or had he really owned some weeks of unrestricted liberty? It was impossible all at once to take in the idea that he was master of his own acts, free to come or go; but, like a man whose system a powerful narcotic has gradually overcome, his recovery from its influence must also be gradual. More than this, he was amazed to see how vague, shadowy, and indistinct the past already seemed. He had imagined he could never forget, and was already forgetting. Every mile put between him and his dungeon blunted more and more the sharpness of memory itself, as the twilight of that memorable day had blurred the fading towers of the Bastile out of the actual landscape. Was it some horrible nightmare from which he had awoke, after suffering the torments of the damned?—woke to smile at a terror which, nevertheless, had seemed so real, so acute? But no; the remembrance of the past had left traces not easy to obliterate; those years of mortal anguish had left their scars deep, ineffaceable as the manacles he had worn. Sir Purbeck Temple did not recognize in the grave, self-contained man who announced himself, the light-hearted, impulsive youth he had parted with some dozen years before. There had been a long and serious interview, at the end of which the stately old man clasped his kinsman in his arms. Not a word more was spoken: these two understood each other perfectly.

"Really, nephew," said the baronet at last, "'tis hard to say what will be the upshot of your affair. I must confess it has no very promising look. Were it no more than a question of ransom, that, indeed, might be managed; but the other conditions are the plague. However, nothing venture, nothing have. There's nothing for you but to keep perfectly quiet here until I've had audience of his majesty. The plain truth of it, nephew," continued Sir Purbeck, "is that the king is jealous as Lucifer of his prerogative. France refuses to acknowledge the *status quo* until it is pounded into her. That limits our ability to treat, and

makes the war a duel in which neither William nor Louis will yield an inch. At St. Germain William is a usurper; at London he is King of England. Keep up your spirits; only, I forewarn you I'm not over-confident."

"Nor am I a whit more so, sir," replied Nelson. "But after one has exhausted all ordinary means, there is still the chapter of accidents, which, I must confess, has served me better than my own wit of late."

"Tush, nephew; I tell you there are no such things as accidents in this world. Everything proceeds from some cause, as sooner or later you will learn. Stay, I have some orders to give in the city: suppose you go with me."

Nelson embraced the offer with pleasure. The baronet's coach was soon at the door. "Alderman Child's, Temple Bar," said Sir Purbeck to the coachman, and the lumbering vehicle rolled away in the direction of Fleet Street. All at once Sir Purbeck pulled the strap and put his head out of the window.

"Give you good-day, sir!" he called out to a gentleman of his own age, who was leisurely proceeding in the same direction, and who looked up when the coach stopped.

"Ah, Sir Purbeck, the same to you. A fine morning," replied the other, approaching the window. Nelson glanced at the new-comer and recognized Lois's father.

"Excuse me," continued the baronet, "but I have a friend here whom you will be glad to meet, or I am much mistaken." So saying, the speaker drew back, and Nelson's and Erving's eyes met. Erving returned Nelson's salute, but looked puzzled.

"How's this? you do not seem to be acquainted," exclaimed the baronet, in a pet; "nevertheless, I had thought, *Mr. Erving—*"

"I crave pardon, Sir Purbeck; there must be some mistake. I have not the honor of knowing this gentleman," said Erving, at last.

"Zounds, sir! then your inquiries about my nephew—"

"This," stammered Erving, starting, "this your nephew!"

"It is indeed I, sir," said Nelson, smiling, and offering his hand to Erving, who took it without seeming to know that he did so. "I can well conceive you find me greatly altered; but not too much so, I hope, not to know an old friend."

"I beg a thousand pardons; and yours, Sir Purbeck: I'm all upset. Now you have spoken, I know you well enough. Believe me, I am sincerely glad to welcome you to England. Odds life! To think that I should not have known Captain Nelson!" ejaculated the bewildered old gentleman.

"No apologies, sir, I beg: one grows old fast where I have been living," said Nelson, his face hardening a little. He then hazarded a polite inquiry for Lois, and learned that she was well and in London. A few questions and answers, not without embarrassment for two of the party, ensued, when the baronet, pleading haste, took leave of Erving, saying, as he did so, "We shall see you soon, I trust, at Temple House; meantime I expect his majesty's permission to present my kinsman at the levee to-morrow." The gentlemen lifted their hats and the coach drove on. Erving remained standing on the same spot until it was out of sight, and then took the nearest way home.

The sign of the Marigold was that of the famous goldsmith, Alderman Child, in his day the banker of many noble families, besides being that of King William himself. It hung next

to Temple Bar, and adjoining the Devil Tavern, of renown, where Ben Jonson and his confederate wits were wont to hold their nightly carousals. Sir Purbeck's visit had no other object than to place a handsome sum at the disposal of his kinsman, and Nelson registered his name and residence in one of the goldsmith's ponderous folios before leaving the place.

Sir Purbeck's generosity did not stop here. His own tailor was ordered to wait on Nelson at the baronet's residence, and at the appointed hour appeared with his apprentice, who mended his goose-quill while his master displayed his stuffs, and who took down the figures while he measured. Nelson had the instinct of a gentleman in matters of dress, and quietly repulsed the draper's insinuating endeavors to attire him like a prince or a fop.

Much to the baronet's gratification, the king granted Nelson the unusual favor of a private audience, to take place after the levee. The intermediate time was occupied in drawing up a memorial setting forth the circumstances of his capture, imprisonment, and the conditions upon which his final release depended. This he expected to present to the king at the favorable moment, and this moment, which promised to be so important to him, was awaited with an impatience he did not attempt to disguise.

Not without a feeling of trepidation, wholly new to him, did Nelson follow his uncle into the splendid banqueting-room of the palace of Whitehall. It was his first encounter with royalty. Great chandeliers, flashing their multiplied lustre from mirrors of Venice glass, deluged the apartment with light. The exquisite Japanese carv*ings, the rich tapestries*, the incompar*able frescos of* Rubens, which decorated the panelled ceiling, dazzled the young colonist with their glare and their magnificence. At one end of the hall was a gallery occupied by a score or so of the king's Dutch guards, in brilliant orange and crimson uniforms. From the other end, behind a latticed balcony which rendered the players invisible, came the strains of instrumental music.

Magnified by the mirrors, glowing, resplendent, and in ceaseless movement, the company swept through the great hall, changing with every instant its rare combinations of light and color, its picturesque groupings, its effective contrasts of costume. The rustling satins, stiffened, incrusted with gems, the nodding plumes, flashing jewels, and splendid toilets of noble dames, the high dignitaries of the court, bedizened with lace and blazing with decorations, fascinated, bewildered the unaccustomed eye of the novice. It was, he thought, as if some garden of rare exotic plants, glorious with color, glittering with fresh dew, loaded with perfume, had been suddenly animated by the hand of enchantment. It is true that Nelson was new to such scenes, but we dare hazard the assertion that many in that assemblage would have given much to experience his sensations of wonder and delight.

Nelson's first impulse was to beat a retreat; but recalling the purpose for which he was come, and seeing himself unnoticed, he collected sufficient presence of mind to heed the baronet's admonition to keep near him. He was wholly unconscious that one pair of bright eyes were devouring him with their regards, or his embarrassment might have been still greater. Those eyes flamed above the border of a fan, which the wearer used as a protection against the two free glances of young gallants, or mayhap to prevent recog-

nition: one moment it was a weapon, another a shield. The lady's white arm rested lightly within that of an elderly gentleman, whose imperturbability was too evidently assumed. He hitched first upon one leg, then upon the other, fiddled with his watch-seals or adjusted his dress-sword twenty times a minute.

Sir Purbeck had advanced half the length of the hall, smiling and nodding right and left, when the folds of tapestry concealing the door at the upper end were drawn aside and a sonorous voice announced, "The King!" The hum of conversation ceased as if by magic; the courtiers, by a common impulse, fell back, ranging themselves on either side, so as to leave the central space clear. This movement disclosed to the view of all the two personages who had just entered. Nelson looked with the rest; rather, let us say, he forgot there was more than a single individual in the room.

Save the respect shown to the man, there was little in the undersized, modestly dressed figure that Nelson saw to indicate the king. But at a second glance there was seen surmounting this quaint figure a head of antique type—the meagre face all character, the features large, strong, and prominent—the front of a successor of the Cæsars. His majesty was clearly a living example of the maxim that half this world's work is done by the sick. His paleness was increased by the full black wig curling upon his shoulders; his sallow complexion by a snowy neck-cloth of Mechlin lace. His features had taken on, never again to put off, an expression of habitual weariness. It was easy to see that the unequal struggle between a great mind, animated by an indomitable will, with bodily infirmity, would not be prolonged. But behind this weakness was reserved power. The full, calm, blue eye, the almost feminine yet resolute mouth, sustained the king's character for that coolness and intrepidity, in the face of great cares or great perils, which constituted him the champion of Protestant Europe, and the successful rival of the man at Versailles. Cold, impassive, austere, beneath this calm exterior was passion, as beneath the frozen summit are smouldering fires, terrible when roused into activity. His energy was marvellous, his industry indefatigable, his endurance of the petty insolences of his factious subjects heroic. The king wore his collar of Saint George, but no other ornament; in this, also, he was the antipodes of his great and powerful antagonist. Louis shone among his courtiers like a sun, whose splendors eclipse all lesser planets; William was more conspicuous at this moment by the modesty of his dress and the gentle gravity of his demeanor. It is true that the real king can afford to dispense with the trappings of royalty.

The king slowly began the circuit of the hall, receiving the homage of the courtiers, and occasionally addressing a word or a compliment to such as he recognized. As he neared the spot where Sir Purbeck stood, Nelson's heart beat violently: he instinctively sheltered himself behind the baronet's broad shoulders. The next thing he heard was a clear voice speaking to his uncle.

"So, Sir Purbeck," said the king, "you are as good as your word; but we do not see that nephew of yours—that hero of many exploits. Where is he?"

"Here, your majesty," answered the baronet, with a low reverence, at the same time stepping aside so as to bring Nelson face to face with the king. His majesty gave Nelson a searching

look, as if to impress the young man's features on his memory, before he said, "Stand forth, sir; a man like you need not be abashed in our presence. You are right welcome, sir. We hear you have suffered grievous wrong; but now," added the king, with a gracious smile, and offering his hand to Nelson, "you are under our protection."

Nelson bent over the hand, small and delicate as a woman's, and kissed it. He then drew a paper from his pocket and presented it, without speaking, to the king. His majesty handed the paper to the nobleman who followed him, with the remark, "See to it, Nottingham; we will ourself look into this matter." The minister took the paper with a stately bow. "Sir Purbeck," continued the king, "bring your nephew to the cabinet-chamber after the audience; we would hold some speech with him." He then passed on with the same slow step, leaving Nelson the focus of a hundred curious eyes.

"Well, nephew?" whispered the baronet, inquiringly, when the king had passed out of ear-shot.

"He is every inch a king; and this the happiest day of my life," murmured the young man.

"How's this, my dear?" whispered Erving in Lois's ear; "you do not look at the king."

"Oh yes, I do," said Lois, quickly; then finishing the sentence softly to herself—"at mine."

The king, having finished his tour, went as he came, and the great hall was soon filled with the hum of animated conversation. Nelson found himself the centre of a group who eagerly listened to Sir Purbeck's explanations, and who overwhelmed his kinsman with compliments and offers of service. "Come, nephew," said the baronet, elbowing his way out of the throng, "we must not keep his majesty waiting."

As they walked toward the door opening into the antechamber, they met a couple just leaving the hall. Nelson recognized Lois in a moment. She courtesied, blushed scarlet, and when she looked up the baronet was hurrying his nephew away in the opposite direction. The gentlemen had exchanged formal salutations; Nelson had bowed to her. That was all—this was their meeting.

The two gentlemen were introduced into the king's cabinet, after giving their names to the usher in waiting. His majesty was seated at a long table covered with green cloth, one corner of which he had pushed back. He had evidently been deeply occupied with a plan of some fortified place which was spread out before him, for his finger stopped on the paper when he looked up. Plans of several important fortresses in the Low Countries hung on the walls, above the wainscot, interspersed with a few rare paintings from the pencils of Titian, Correggio, Raphael, Guido, and Giulo Romano, that had escaped the blind fury of the Civil War. At the foot of the table stood a man, already famous, with whom the king had been conferring. The only other person present was the Earl of Nottingham, who was writing at the king's dictation when the usher announced Sir Purbeck Temple and Mr. Nelson. After acknowledging their obeisance by a dignified inclination of the head, his majesty said, "Leave us, Churchill; but attend us here at eleven of the clock to-morrow: meanwhile reduce your ideas to writing, for we had rather criticise than originate plans for others in so weighty a matter." The person so addressed bowed and withdrew.

"Now, sirs," pursued the king, look-

ing at some memoranda handed him by the earl, "we are already possessed of the facts in Mr. Nelson's affair. Our opinion is that the demands of our good brother the most Christian King are extravagant and inadmissible. For such conditions there is no other answer than refusal. Is this also your opinion, my lord?" he added, looking at the minister.

"It is, sire: it is not in your majesty's power to execute such terms," replied the earl.

"You hear, sir," pursued King William, turning toward Nelson. "Speak; what can we do for you?"

"Sire," said Nelson, "since this is your majesty's decision, I have only to request permission to embark for France."

"For France! Take care, young man, that you do not trifle with us."

"Sire," rejoined Nelson, falling on his knees, "my life is yours, dispose of it; but my honor is pledged to return to France if this suit fail."

"And we do release you from your pledge. Your affair is no longer a personal question for you to pass upon, but a question of the rights of one of our subjects. You are free, sir. Stay; is there not a question of money?" Nottingham nodded. "Very well; then we charge ourself with the payment thereof from our privy purse," concluded the king.

Nelson seized the hand which the king held out to raise him, and carried it to his lips. The temptation was great, but the man was equal to it.

"Hear me one moment, your majesty," he pleaded. "When I was a poor prisoner, plunged in misery and despair, an angel came to my rescue, and I was saved. If I do not keep faith, I not only forfeit my honor, which I hold dearer than life, but endanger the *friends who stand engaged* for me. I beseech you, sire, let me redeem my promise: give me leave to depart."

The king's brow grew dark. He withdrew his hand and, holding up a warning finger, said slowly and with emphasis, "On your allegiance, we charge you not to stir hence. Obey!"

Nelson sprang to his feet and drew himself to his full height. "Please God, sire, if I live I will go back."

"Say you so?" exclaimed the king, angrily. "Then you shall find there are prisons in England, and that we are king. Ho, my lord! a warrant to commit this young rebel to the Tower. Stay," he rapidly added; "we give you until to-morrow to consider of it, Mr. Nelson; and you, Sir Purbeck Temple, shall answer it to us that your kinsman is forthcoming at our good pleasure. Leave us ere we repent our forbearance. Odds-bodikins! to brave us thus to our face! Go!"

"A pretty mess you have made of it!" said the baronet, when they were once more in the open air. "You have defied the king, and I am undone!"

"Do you then too upbraid me with refusing to commit this foul wrong under the king's protection? Is there no such thing as honor in the world? Remember, I have Temple blood in my veins. Disown me, denounce me to the king, if you will, but never shall such cowardly betrayal sully the name of John Nelson!" burst out the young man, in great excitement.

"No, truly," ejaculated the baronet, grasping his nephew's hand — "no, truly; we will breast the storm together. Let the king visit his displeasure on me, if he will; better so a thousand times than the honor of our house should be tarnished by a dishonorable deed."

"Then I must escape this very night; to-morrow will be too late."

"Be it so. You shall have a swift

steed; and Jordan shall attend you with a led horse. Come in: you must ride hard, and a glass of wine will do you no harm." Uncle and nephew then ran up the steps of Temple House with an alacrity which no one would be likely to suspect proceeded from the desire on the part of one to escape from liberty into bondage.

At midnight Nelson and his trusty companion, well armed and mounted, took the road to Dover. Nelson calculated that by using the greatest expedition he would arrive in the neighborhood of his destination in seven or eight hours, where he purposed to remain concealed until opportunity could be found to cross over to France. Sir Purbeck gave him a bag of guineas, with his blessing, and urged him to spare neither whip nor spur. The baronet had also furnished his kinsman with letters of credit to Jews of Rochelle for a sum much larger than the ransom; and, not satisfied with this, had also pressed upon him some valuable jewels, which he said would be more easily converted into money than paper. "And now, nephew," he had said, while Jordan held the young man's stirrup, "mount and away."

The two travellers rode slowly through the dark streets of London. They had reached the outskirts of the city, and were quickening their pace, when they heard outcries and the clash of steel, apparently proceeding out of the darkness beyond them. Nelson gave his horse the spur, at the same time drawing a pistol from its holster. The animal, feeling the spur, dashed on at a pace which quickly brought his rider to the scene of the tumult. The cries had ceased, but Nelson's eyes, long accustomed to the darkness of a *dungeon,* made out the figure of a man *stretched upon the* ground, while two *others, with naked* swords in their hands, had faced about at the noise of horses' hoofs. Seeing only a single assailant, they prepared to stand their ground, and, as Nelson reined up, one seized his bridle, while the other, precipitating himself toward the rider, commanded him in a hoarse voice to dismount. Nelson saw with whom he had to deal. Driving the spurs into his horse's flanks, the animal, maddened by pain, sprang forward, overthrowing the man who held the bridle and trampling him under his feet. The second robber aimed a thrust at Nelson, which the latter only avoided by stooping forward over his horse's neck; but at the same moment the animal became almost unmanageable. Nelson no longer hesitated. Turning in his saddle, he aimed at his assailant and fired. The man dropped. Jordan now came up, and Nelson commanded him to secure the first ruffian, while he himself dismounted and went to the assistance of the gentleman for whom he had so seasonably arrived. Lights were now seen glancing about the windows of a villa near the highway, whose occupants had evidently been alarmed by the report of fire-arms.

The gentleman was sitting up, but had been badly wounded in the hip, and was unable to stand. Nelson, assisted by Jordan, who had hitched the horses to trees by the roadside, raised the wounded man in his arms and carried him to the door of the villa, which was no sooner reached than a sash overhead was thrown up and a night-capped head thrust out. Nelson saw the barrel of a blunderbuss covering him with sure aim. "For the love of Heaven, sir, whoever you may be, open to us. A man has been waylaid and well-nigh murdered at your doors," he cried.

"Humph!" replied he of the night-cap, without raising his cheek from his

weapon. "How do I know that you are not the assassins you speak of? Stand farther off! Who are you?"

"Sir," said the wounded man, with an effort, "what this gentleman says is true. I entreat your help for Arthur Trefry, of his majesty's regiment of Guards."

"If I do not declare my name," added Nelson, "it is because I am a stranger in London; but, to silence your scruples, myself and servant will retire upon your promise to extend your hospitality to this gentleman. But make haste, sir," he cried, feeling his charge slipping to the ground; "he has fainted."

"Stop, sir, and I will come down," grumbled the householder. In a moment quick steps were heard on the stairs, the door was unbarred, and Nelson found himself in the presence of an armed man-servant, two half-dressed maids trembling with terror, and of Royal Erving, who stood with his blunderbuss in one hand and a candlestick in the other. Another figure, clothed in light drapery, stood at the head of the staircase, leaning over the balusters. A suppressed scream came from this quarter, and the figure then disappeared.

Nelson and Jordan laid the insensible man on a sofa in the hall, and the former applied his little knowledge of surgery to the effort to stanch the flow of blood from the wound. When Erving recovered from his astonishment at this unexpected encounter, he exclaimed, "God's life, man, why did you not say you were John Nelson at once? Here, James, saddle the bay mare—or stay; perhaps, as the case seems urgent, this gentleman will lend you his horse. Bring the chirurgeon back with you: say 'tis life and death. You, Joanna, call your mistress, and then prepare some refreshment. What *are you gaping at?* Off with you!"

Seeing the wounded officer regaining consciousness under the care of his host, Nelson began to regret the delay his adventure had cost him; and telling Erving that he must now take his leave, begged that he would return the horse despatched for the doctor to his uncle in the city, as he must himself ride on.

"What! you are leaving London, then?" propounded the ex-councillor; "but why this haste? above all, when the roads are unsafe, as you have such good reason to know."

Nelson could only plead that his business was peremptory. He was not prepared to make a confidant of Erving, and had already lost a good half-hour of precious time.

"As you will, then," said Erving, with a chagrin he did not care to dissemble. "I can urge you no further, if such be your determination; but at least, now that you are here, you will not go until you have spoken with Lois: it would give us both pain, else. Come forth, Lois, and assure Mr. Nelson he is welcome to Briarwood. Ah, here she is. Zounds! sweetheart," continued Erving, addressing Lois, who came forward with downcast looks and pale cheeks, "here is Master Nelson, whom Providence sends us, hurrying away from London as if the bailiffs were after him."

Nelson changed color. The allusion was uncomfortably near the mark. The old gentleman pleaded some errand to leave the young people together, and Nelson found himself alone with Lois, listening to the heavy breathing of the wounded man. There was an embarrassed pause, and then Lois spoke. "Surely such an old friend," and she lingered over the word, "can have no doubt of his welcome here, even under such untoward circumstances," said she, glancing at the sofa.

Nelson felt a throbbing in his throat which choked his utterance. If there are secret antipathies, so are there secret sympathies, stronger than ourselves, before which all the labored fabrics of reason crumble in a moment and are dust. Nelson had believed he no longer loved the woman, but a memory. The woman had disappointed him, had put an insurmountable barrier between them; the memory was still his own—his ideal, his joy, his dream. The one was the body, the other the soul, but forever divorced the one from the other. And now he thought only of the woman whose voice thrilled and vibrated in his inmost soul; who had in an instant resumed her power over him—before whom he stood abashed, trembling and speechless. And yet he had not been afraid before the king. Why should the man be flint to every other temptation, and wax to this cowardice of the heart?

"I hardly dare call the occasion fortunate, though it has procured me the pleasure of this meeting. May I trust that your natural alarm at such a rude summons may have no unpleasant consequences?" replied Nelson, struggling for calmness.

"Truly," said Lois, with her old smile, "Mr. Nelson forgets that I am an American, like himself; and yet, methinks, I may confess to being a little frightened, without shame to my sex or country. But what was my father just saying?—that you were leaving London?"

Nelson detected a shade of reproach in Lois's voice as she asked the question. "I should have been many miles from London ere this," he replied, looking uneasily about him.

"Are you, then, sorry to have saved this poor gentleman's life, an old acquaintance too, it would seem, to say nothing of discovering our abode, like a knight-errant seeking adventures?" propounded Lois, with evident pique.

"Not so; but my time is valuable, and the occasion most pressing."

"Indeed, it would seem so. Such haste, and at this hour!" thought Lois. "What does it mean?" She had availed herself of the privilege of her sex to adopt a certain freedom toward the man with whom she had once stood on such intimate terms; who in by-gone days had no secrets from her. Moreover, she knew that he needed to be drawn out. She mused a moment, and then, before Nelson was aware, put her hand on his arm and said, rapidly, "Nelson, are you in danger?"

"Lois, I am. If I do not reach the coast before to-morrow noon I am a lost man."

"Cannot we conceal you? Command us to the utmost. Speak!"

Nelson shook his head.

"Fly, then, and without a moment's delay," urged Lois, pushing him toward the door.

"Still noble, still generous," thought Nelson. It was the crisis of his fate. Lois had shown herself ready to sacrifice something for him, and the thought gave him a thrill of joy; but she had evidently misunderstood the motive of his flight. He would undeceive her, and then—! In as few words as possible he explained the nature of his position. Lois looked more and more astonished. When he had finished, she repeated, in a sort of bewilderment, "Go back to France—disobey the king—wherefore?"

"My word is pledged. You do not counsel me to break it, do you?"

"But the king's order; as a subject, you are bound to obey."

"Does that absolve me?"

"Why not? Your sovereign's command is an impregnable safeguard. Who will dare question it?"

"Myself, Lois."

"Your scruples are superhuman," said Lois, pettishly. "Why," she continued, grasping at the last straw—"why keep faith with those who have kept none with you?"

"Because I must answer it to my own conscience; let others do as they may."

Lois grew white: her foot beat the floor. Was this an allusion to the past? Was the reproach two-edged! Were her perceptions of right and wrong held up for self-examination? She felt that he was escaping her: instinctively she clutched the nearest weapon.

"Nelson, you have another motive; this person who aided your release has doubtless a deep interest in your return; so deep that in your simplicity of heart you find yourself in the toils."

"You wrong her," said Nelson, impulsively; "she is an angel."

"And you the dupe of a designing woman. Do you not see? Why, 'tis as clear as day! Your detention in the Bastile—the hard conditions, made only to be rejected. Oh, they knew with whom they had to deal!"

"I hope, nay, I believe so."

"Nelson, you are a child!"

"Be it so: I am what I am."

"Think, ere it be too late: this moment may never return." The words had a double significance. Both felt it.

"I have; and my mind is made up, irrevocably," said Nelson, putting on his hat. He heard the sound of footsteps outside.

"Then," said Lois, putting forth a last effort, "you shall not walk with open eyes to self-destruction. I will denounce you. Oh, is there no one to stop this madman?"

"Yes," said Trefry, raising himself painfully on one elbow, just as the door opened to admit the doctor, followed by Erving and the servant; "in the king's name I arrest you, Mr. Nelson. Your sword, sir! Gentlemen, seize the prisoner if he resists." Having exhausted his strength with this effort, Trefry fell back and closed his eyes; while Nelson, after a contemptuous glance at the officer, and a pitying one at Lois, pushed by the doctor, strode quickly down the walk, vaulted into his saddle, and, with sparks flying from his horse's hoofs, galloped down the road before the astonished spectators could recover their presence of mind. At daybreak he dismissed his servant, sending him back by a different road, and, trusting to his own resources, continued his way by the most secluded and unfrequented by-ways toward the coast.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PEACE OF RYSWICK.

M. De Ponchartrain was at work in that famous cabinet of the Louvre in which Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louvois had successively toiled and intrigued for the glory of France, personal aggrandizement, or the persecution of the Protestant faith, according to their genius, their avarice, or their bigoted zeal for the maintenance of the Catholic religion. He was immersed in a mass of papers, when his *huissier* lifted a corner of the curtain which closed the entrance to the antechamber. The minister interrogated him by a look.

"A letter for monseigneur," said the latter.

"On whose part?"

"An Englishman, who says he has just arrived from Dover."

"Give me the letter."

The huissier respectfully presented

the packet, and the minister, after cutting the seals, glanced rapidly at its contents. Apparently his surprise was extreme, for he read the missive a second time before he looked up. "Is this man still within the palace?" he demanded.

"He is, monseigneur."

"Show him in: and stay — keep within call." The officer bowed and withdrew. The minister again looked at the letter; his face lighted up. "This Englishman must be unique; I will see him," he murmured. There was a movement of the curtain, and the officer entered, followed by Nelson.

"You are the writer of this letter?" questioned the minister. Nelson bowed.

"You say here that, having failed in obtaining the concessions on which your release depended, you have, of your own free choice, returned to France — that is to say, to imprisonment."

"Those are my words: yes, monseigneur," replied Nelson.

M. de Ponchartrain gave his visitor a penetrating look, but the latter sustained it without flinching; he was cool and collected. Still, this unconcern might mask a purpose; this apparent loyalty be assumed to disarm suspicion. The minister went to a cabinet, and referred to some papers which he took from a pigeon-hole. He then said, abruptly, "You were near being shot at Quebec as a spy."

"Yes, monseigneur."

"A warning which some years of imprisonment ought to have sufficiently impressed on your memory, it would seem."

"I am no spy," said Nelson, calmly: "if I were, I should not be here."

"*Tenez*, let us hear your story, then; *but take care how* you attempt to *deceive me; if you do*, your past experience will seem child's play to what is in store for you."

Without hesitation, and unmoved by the threat, Nelson recounted, as succinctly as possible, what had occurred during his stay in England up to the moment when we left him in search of means to cross the Channel. He did not omit a single detail except the midnight adventure on the road to Dover, with which he argued the minister had no concern. After leaving Jordan, he had pushed on until his horse gave out, when he dismounted, and leaving the animal to crop the herbage by the roadside, made the best of his way on foot. Emerging from a thick wood, he found himself near a small fishing hamlet, with the sea before him. Overcome with hunger and fatigue, he knocked at the door of the first cabin, where he was hospitably received, and, after satisfying the cravings of his appetite, took his host aside, frankly telling him of his desire to reach the French coast as speedily as possible, and without suppressing the fact that he expected to be pursued. A guinea had quickly silenced the scruples of the fisherman, who promised to conceal the fugitive until opportunity could be found to cross over.

Disguised in the coarse garb of a fisherman, Nelson had passed four days in the hut, only stirring out after nightfall, ignorant if he had been pursued, or if the coast-guards had been put upon his traces. His impatience to be gone was only equal to that of his host to be rid of his compromising guest; but the latter had cast about in vain for news of some smuggling craft, in which he hoped to procure Nelson a passage. Nelson at last determined to take a bold step. His host had a small boat. After much chaffering, the fisherman agreed to part with his bark and tackle for double its value.

Nelson provided himself with a compass, water, and provisions, and trusting to his own skill, on the same night hoisted sail and was soon tossing on the billows of the Channel. The wind continued fair throughout the night, and the next day Nelson landed at Boulogne.

"Here, monseigneur," concluded Nelson, "I was obliged to have recourse to a stratagem, as the governor would not permit me to proceed. But the subterfuge was a harmless one. I stated that I had just come from London, and that my speedy arrival at Paris was of importance to personages whom it would be impolitic to name. My manner, perhaps my reticence, my disguise, together with the story of my crossing over in an open boat, which was vouched for in his presence, impressed the governor with the idea that I was the bearer of secret despatches from the court of London. He made no further opposition, but at once gave his permission to depart, and an order to use the relays of post-horses on my way. However, he had the care to provide me with an escort, or a guard, I know not which," said Nelson, smiling, "and last night I arrived in Paris before the closing of the gates. To-day I am at your excellency's orders. But I have a single request."

"Name it," said the minister, who had not lost a word or a gesture.

"Permission to depart for La Rochelle."

"Wherefore?"

"To release the friends who stand bound for my return from their engagement. I pledged myself to return in person."

"Good: and then—?"

"I am at monseigneur's orders, prisoner or no prisoner, bond or free," *replied Nelson.*

"Where did you lodge last night?"

"At the sign of the Iron Cross, Rue de la Harpe."

"Monsieur," said the minister, with an accent and look which could not be mistaken, "I ask your pardon for my suspicions; *sur ma vie*, I have never known a similar example of rectitude. There are not many men who would have done as you have. For myself, I feel sure you will not abuse the privilege you ask. But it is necessary to submit your suit to his majesty. The king shall hear your story, and you shall know his decision in good time. Go back to your lodgings. Keep your chamber until otherwise ordered. Adieu, sir; you have a noble heart, and I am pleased with you."

Nelson bowed in grateful acknowledgment, and followed the usher out of the cabinet. The minister's reception was a favorable augury; but behind the minister was the king. Was fortune really tired of persecuting him? would his prayer be granted? He locked himself in his chamber, alleging fatigue to his inquisitive landlord, and passed the remainder of the day in writing to Monsieur Boncœur, taking this precaution in the event his request should be denied. He also wrote to Marie and to his uncle. The minister will not refuse to forward my letters, he argued.

Two days afterward Nelson saw a guardsman ride up to the door of the Iron Cross, while the host ran, cap in hand, to the inn door to receive him. Without dismounting, the soldier took a paper from his belt, looked at the superscription, and demanded to know if one Nelson lodged there. Receiving an affirmative answer, he was handing the letter to the landlord, when Nelson leaned out of his window. "I am he you seek, monsieur," he said.

"On the part of the king!" ex

claimed the *mousquetaire*, inserting the point of his sword in the folds of the letter and handing it to Nelson.

"One would imagine it a challenge, from the manner of delivery," said Nelson, taking the letter.

The guardsman laughed, and answered gayly, "Monsieur is English. *À la guerre comme à la guerre.*" He then cantered off down the street. The landlord looked crestfallen; he had not had even the chance to read the superscription; but the uniform of the king's guards was well known, and his guest had risen immensely in his estimation. Nelson tore open the envelope and devoured its contents at a glance. There were only half a dozen lines.

"It is our will that the Sieur Nelson, prisoner of war, repair to La Rochelle, where he will take up his residence until our good pleasure shall be otherwise signified to him, the said Nelson. The Governor of Rochelle will receive the parole of said Nelson, and accord him full liberty within our said city of Rochelle and environs."

The document was signed by the minister, and countersigned by the king. Nelson waved it in the air. "At last!" he cried; "at last!" Well might he exult in its possession! it was at once an acknowledgment and a reparation.

It may be guessed that with this precious talisman in his pocket Nelson did not delay his arrangements for departure. But before setting out he had promised himself to make one effort to discover the fate of his fellow-prisoner. Since the hour they had separated in the governor's room, he had neither seen nor heard from Alden. What could have become of him? Was he still incarcerated in the fortress? The thing was probable. How to ascertain whether his conjecture was well founded or not?

Nelson's first care was to provide himself with a horse for his journey. With the aid of his host he purchased a strong, sure-footed beast which had all the qualities, good and bad, of his Flemish blood. He knew that the governor of the Bastile received no visits until after the hour of noon; that is, not until the usual routine of the fortress—reports of the officers of the guard, of the major, the turnkeys—had been gone through with. But even then, to procure admission it was necessary to have the king's order, or at least the minister's, and he had neither the one nor the other. It was therefore without much expectation of obtaining news of Alden that he mounted his horse, bid good-bye to his host, and rode toward the Faubourg St. Antoine.

He dismounted at a cabaret in the neighborhood, where he left his horse, taking his way on foot toward the fortress; but he had not yet found even a plausible expedient for gaining admission when he stood before the principal gate which fronted the Rue St. Antoine. Nelson marched boldly up to the sentinel who leaned against the arch, and, seeing that he was armed only with a halberd, determined his plan of action. Without regarding the soldier, Nelson attempted to pass beyond; but the former barred the way with his weapon, and cried out "*Halte!*" Putting on his blandest smile, the intruder muttered some words in English, among which the puzzled soldier could only distinguish "Governor," at the same time showing the king's order with an air of confidence. He had counted on the sentinel's inability to read. The latter stupidly turned the paper over and then handed it back, at the same time striking the iron of his weapon against the flag-stone. Seeing the way open, Nelson walked quickly on across the ex-

terior court, which had a passage on the right, into the garden of the Arsenal. The sentinel at the drawbridge, notified by his comrade's signal, received Nelson with the same ceremony, but on his attempt to pass, as he had previously done, presented the point of his pike. In vain Nelson pointed to the king's well-known signature; the man shook his head and repeated the signal. In a moment an officer appeared, who demanded Nelson's business. "I will tell it to the governor," said the latter.

"Your order of admission?"

"I will show it to the governor."

"Your order?" insisted the officer.

"I will produce it to the governor."

Without pursuing the colloquy, the officer called a couple of soldiers, who, without further ceremony, seized the persistent intruder and thrust him outside the gates. "Well," muttered the discomfited Nelson, "there is only one thing more difficult than getting out of the Bastile, and that is to get in." So saying, he made a tour of that part of the *faubourg* contiguous to the garden wall, hoping to catch a glimpse of Alden among the prisoners, who at this hour usually walked on the ramparts. Disappointed in this expectation, he returned to the cabaret, mounted his horse, and took the road to Orleans by Charenton, Corbeil, and Estampes.

Thanks to his order, and a well-furnished purse, Nelson encountered no other enemies on his long road than hunger and fatigue. The first was an open sesame before which all gates were opened, and there is no passport to the hearts of an innkeeper like the second. Toward dusk, on the seventh day, he descended into the valley of the Charente, and saw with feelings difficult to describe the white towers and steeples of Angoulême rising before him. Involuntarily he reined in his tired beast, and, taking off his hat, suffered the fresh breeze of evening to cool his temples. The sound of vesper-bells, to which he had so often listened when a prisoner, was wafted to the spot. There was a pervading peace which tranquillized his mind, possessed as it still was with doubts and misgivings, which seemed to prefigure a happy ending to his wanderings, a sweet and joyful respite from the long struggle with destiny.

Nelson's horse climbed the steep hillside, and in a few minutes his master descended at the door of the principal inn. When he had brushed the dust from his clothes, and swallowed his supper, it was already too late to present himself at the Hôtel de Ville, and he had promised himself not to appear before the Boncœurs until he should in person discharge the obligation they had given for his return. To-morrow he would identify himself, and claim the release of his sureties; this being accomplished, he would instantly seek out his patrons, and they should then see whether he could be grateful or not.

Full of these ideas, and of others needless to anticipate, Nelson demanded to be shown to his chamber. His landlord himself hastened to perform this service for a guest whose appearance was so distinguished, and who had taken his best room without contesting his price. "Was there anything monsieur desired?" "Nothing, except another candle," replied his guest. "I have letters to write, and must be early astir," he added.

"Monsieur is a stranger in these parts?" insinuated the landlord, pretending to busy himself about the chamber.

"Yes, and no: but how know you that?"

"I remark that monsieur's accent is

of the Northern provinces; that is to say, monsieur is from Brittany, or Normandy, or Picardy?"

"You have sharp ears. I am, in fact, from the North. But good-night. I would be alone."

Two minutes afterward there was a rap at the door. "Come in," said Nelson. The servant entered with lights, but on seeing who was the occupant of the chamber uttered an exclamation. "*Ah, mon Dieu!*" he stammered.

"What are you staring at, sirrah? Put down the lights!" said Nelson.

"Ah, monsieur! is it really you? What happiness! but you do not then recollect Lafitte?" said the trembling domestic.

"Lafitte?" repeated Nelson, summoning his recollections, and remarking with inquietude the man's eagerness. "No, I do not remember you; and yet my memory is passably good."

"But monsieur remembers Marie Boncœur, without doubt?" Nelson looked sharply at his interlocutor.

"Do I not? It is to see—to see M. Boncœur that I am here in Angoulême. Have you a message from him? Speak!" commanded Nelson, more and more uneasy at the look and manner of the domestic.

"Oh, sir, what a misfortune!"

"Do you not see that you are keeping me in suspense? Speak out! What has happened? What is this misfortune?" demanded Nelson, rising from his chair and approaching Lafitte, who was staring at him with haggard eyes.

"Forgive me, monsieur, I am old and shaken. But you are then ignorant?" said the old servant, with staring eyes. "*Mon Dieu!* he knows nothing!" finished he, observing the hopeless look on Nelson's face.

"*I am ignorant of everything that has happened in Angoulême since I left it.* Tell me, without more waste of time, the meaning of your looks and words. Are you dumb, fellow? Speak, I say!"

Thus adjured, Lafitte began in a trembling voice to relate how monsieur and Marie, having neglected to attend mass or confession, had fallen under suspicion of the authorities; how he, Lafitte, hearing that Boncœur's arrest as a convert to the religion was determined upon, had lost no time in warning his master; how one of his ancient comrades had told him his kind master and beloved mistress would soon be looking through the bars of the accursed château, already crammed with the victims of religious persecution; how their zeal in behalf of the English heretic—"pardon, sir, but you have commanded me to speak plainly," said Lafitte—had been tortured into an accusation. "Alas! sir," concluded the faithful servitor, "why did you not come sooner?"

Nelson began to walk the room, at the opening of Lafitte's doleful story. He stopped short at the reproach implied in these last words. A feeling of unutterable despondency came over him. God help him! and had he, miserable wretch that he was, contributed to bring disaster upon the only friends his misfortunes had vouchsafed? It was too much. Nelson clinched his teeth and griped Lafitte's arm until the man winced with pain. In a hoarse voice he demanded the sequel.

Lafitte had little more to tell. Thanks to his old confederates, the smugglers, M. Boncœur and his daughter had made their escape from their country-house at Hirsac, at night, disguised as peasants. Boncœur had entered Rochelle, leading an ass on which Marie was mounted. "*Pauvre innocente!*" exclaimed Lafitte, raising his eyes to heaven. Her beauty had been the sub-

ject of some coarse jests at the gate; "but, sir," cried Lafitte, with sparkling eyes, "I was there; and if any had dared touch the hem of her garment, *pardieu* I would have driven my dagger into him!" Nelson repaid this outburst with a look that spoke volumes. "Our precautions," resumed Lafitte, "were so well taken that the fugitives embarked the same night on board a felucca, with the little they had saved for their exile. I was arrested, questioned, threatened; but being known for a good Catholic, and a hater of heretics, they released me after two or three days. I took service here, and monsieur now knows all."

"Give me your hand, friend," said Nelson, whose every nerve and muscle had been strained to the utmost tension during Lafitte's narration; "but are you sure your master is in safety?"

"Certain," replied Lafitte, positively. "The felucca is swift; besides," he added, significantly, "the authorities of Rochelle have reasons of their own for not molesting the *contrebandiers*." Lafitte touched his pocket.

"Lafitte," said Nelson, "will you enter my service?"

"Willingly, sir; for I have a presentiment that you will find my master and mistress," answered Lafitte.

"Consider yourself engaged, then," said Nelson, giving him a handful of money. "But pay attention to what I say. Your intelligence decides me to change my plans. To-morrow I set out for Rochelle. Understand, I do not wish to be recognized here, and shall leave at daybreak. Do not suffer even a glance of the eye to betray that you have any knowledge of me. Remain where you are until I send for you. Get all the intelligence you can of M. Boncœur's affairs; perhaps it will be of use."

"*Ah, sir, that is* not difficult; his estates have been seized, and declared forfeited to the crown. His flight is contrary to the Edict."

"No matter, then; you must not remain longer here. Say that I inquired of you respecting my route: and stay; fetch me a bottle of wine and a morsel of bread-and-cheese."

Lafitte obeyed his new master's order, and kissed his hand in token of his service. "*Tiens*," he murmured, while going down-stairs, "M. Boncœur would not let me go with him because he could not afford to keep a servant. *Allons donc!* I do not love those English, but this one seems to me of the right stuff; besides," concluded the cunning Lafitte, "either he has a great interest in mademoiselle, or I am an idiot."

Having decided to preserve his incognito, Nelson relinquished his first intention of presenting himself at the prefecture. To do so would avail nothing, and the sum pledged for his return would only be swept incontinent into the king's coffers, instead of its legitimate owners, upon his declaring himself. He had formed another purpose respecting this money. Upon quitting the hostlery, Nelson pretended to have heard that the roads were infested with robbers, and demanded the company of an armed servant. The innkeeper placed Lafitte at the disposal of his timorous guest, and the two were soon *en route*. This was a pretext on Nelson's part, to be able to converse freely with Lafitte, for he had a hundred questions to ask and as many answers to receive upon the untoward fortunes of the Boncœurs, without taking into account that he burned to know what were their conclusions with regard to his own long and to them unaccountable silence. With an inward satisfaction known only to those who have passed unscathed through

the fiery ordeal of temptation, Nelson learned that Marie had remained firm in her conviction that he would return.

"Yonder is Jarnac," said Lafitte, imitating his master, who checked his horse in the shade of a branching chestnut. "We must now separate," said the latter, but first tell me where I may communicate with those obliging friends of yours, the smugglers. Without doubt I shall need their aid, and that speedily." With many and repeated injunctions of secrecy, Lafitte gave the desired information. "It is for mademoiselle," said the honest fellow, with an appealing look; "I am her slave." He then turned his mule's head in the direction of Angoulême. Nelson watched him until out of sight. "I too love her," he murmured; "and would give my right hand to tell her so at this moment."

At eight in the evening the young man rode through the Porte d'Horloge, his mind possessed by thoughts and fancies various as the pavement under his horse's feet, brought from all quarters of the habitable globe by the ships of Rochelle. His first care was to present himself at the château, where, after answering a few formal questions, he produced the king's order. The governor merely stipulated that he should present himself each day at the Hôtel de Ville. "You have there a safeguard," he said, indicating the order, "which no one will venture to question."

Nelson's sojourn at Rochelle was destined to be brief. He took lodgings in a modest but tidy-looking *auberge* near the Hôtel de Ville. Here, subjected to no surveillance, he wandered about the city, the quays, the neighborhood made memorable by the *siege, without* the least inquietude. *He was absolutely without* tidings from *his friends in England*, and as ignorant of what might be the danger his uncle had incurred in aiding his escape. But though it was large, Rochelle was still a prison; and though he walked about unnoticed and unchallenged, he at times felt an inexpressible yearning to see New England again.

One day, while witnessing the funeral pageant of some personage of distinction in the ancient church Saint Jean de Perrot, the service was interrupted by repeated salvos of artillery from the fortress and the ships of war. At this signal all the bells of the city rung out a joyful peal. On leaving the church, Nelson saw flags hoisted over the Hôtel de Ville and on all the shipping in the port; the streets were filled with people, shaking hands with and congratulating each other, while from the open windows men and women asked the news of those in the streets, and shouted it across to their neighbors. Nelson followed the throng to the Hôtel de Ville, which was already surrounded by several thousand people, listening to the reading of a proclamation by the prefect. When the reading was finished, there was a universal clapping of hands; and when the orator repeated the formula, "God save the King!" a thousand shouts repeated it after him. Nelson had not heard; he ventured to ask the news of a by-stander.

"Peace with England," was the reply. That night bonfires blazed in the squares, and the windows of public buildings were illuminated. Nelson knew that he was free—that the first shot had broken the spell whose malevolent influence had held him fast all these years. The first use he made of this knowledge was to send for Lafitte.

The Peace of Ryswick was published at Rochelle on the 10th October, 1697. The next day Nelson paid his last visit to the château, and received

permission to depart when and how he pleased. Nelson was not the man to tempt fortune by delay. A small bark was chartered, on which he and Lafitte embarked for the nearest English port. The voyage was tempestuous; but, after being driven a hundred miles out of her course by contrary gales, the vessel's anchor was at last dropped in the harbor of Plymouth. Nelson's first care, upon landing, was to engage post-horses for London.

Sir Purbeck Temple had just risen from table, in that state of benevolent satisfaction a man is apt to feel who has dined well, when he heard the clatter of horse's feet in the court-yard below. Presently his valet announced that a gentleman desired to speak with his master—"a gentleman from France," concluded the valet, in answer to a look. "From France, said he?" exclaimed the baronet, rising from his chair: "show him up."

The meeting between uncle and nephew was most cordial, and it was with a feeling of pardonable pride that the baronet surveyed the fine figure and manly face of his kinsman. When Nelson had satisfied his uncle's curiosity by giving a hasty outline of his adventures since leaving London, his first question showed what was uppermost in his thoughts. "Have you found them, sir?" he eagerly asked.

"Yes, and trouble enough I had of it: 'twas like looking for a needle in a haystack, now that London is overrun with French refugees," replied Sir Purbeck.

"But you did find them?"

"Oh yes. I traced them to obscure lodgings in the Borough, though not until I had obtained an order calling upon all foreigners sojourning in London to register themselves at the Guildhall. 'Twas well thought of, was it not?" *queried the* baronet, smiling at *his own fertility of invention.*

"Capital; and the money?"

"Ah! there, now, I was like to have failed. Your proud Frenchman insisted that by returning you had fulfilled your engagement to the letter, and nonplussed me by asking what claim he could possibly have upon you. Between ourselves, what the deuce is your motive?"

"Motive, my dear uncle! you shall know all. This man to whom I was already deeply indebted had suffered the loss of property and estates by embracing the Protestant religion. Would you believe it, sir! his generous assistance in the hour of my greatest necessity hastened his ruin? Imagine, if you can, my dismay on learning this from an old servant of the family. What was to be done? How retrieve this disaster? Was a good and noble action such as M. Boncœur's to work irreparable injury to him and his? Instead of going to the Prefecture of Angoulême, where my presence would only have caused M. Boncœur's fifteen thousand livres to disappear with the rest of his property, I hastened to Rochelle. You, dear uncle, at my request, have refunded this money."

"Ah," interposed Sir Purbeck, "I think I see your drift."

"Yes," said Nelson, gleefully; "the money being paid to its legitimate owner before forfeiture, and by a British subject, the fifteen thousand livres in the prefect's hands are ours to claim. You have M. Boncœur's release properly attested?"

"It is in my secretary. The claim shall be made. But suppose the French Court refuses to disgorge?"

"They cannot, if the matter be pressed home upon them; but, in any case, M. Boncœur has his own again."

"That is a deed after my own heart nephew!" said the baronet, warm

"See now how we talk, while God doeth what pleases him. His majesty has been pleased to appoint me one of the commissioners to settle certain matters under the treaty. It shall go hard but your French livres jingle in your pocket yet."

"I congratulate you, sir. The king, then, has forgiven my escapade?"

"'Gad, Nelson," said the baronet, becoming suddenly serious, "it was touch and go with me for awhile whether I should see the inside of the Tower or no. His majesty was mad as a March hare; but in the end I believe he thinks none the worse of you. However, you had best lie close until everything is cleared up. Bless my life!" exclaimed Sir Purbeck, looking at his watch, "as I live, 'tis past midnight! To bed, nephew, to bed!"

A certain locality in the Borough High Street was the scene of an equally interesting interview on the morrow. During the day Nelson did not venture abroad, but as soon as night enveloped the vast city in its dusky embrace he bade Lafitte prepare to accompany him. Under favor of the darkness, the two men silently took their way toward London Bridge. Nelson was unusually taciturn, and urged his horse forward in a way that bespoke his impatience. At length he stopped before an antiquated-looking house, and, throwing his bridle to Lafitte, knocked at the door. As his knock remained unanswered, he pushed open the door, and, bidding Lafitte wait his return, ascended the stairs.

Marie Boncœur was alone, when a foot-fall in the passage roused her from a deep reverie. A candle burning in the adjoining room obscurely lighted the humble apartment where she then was. She opened the door timidly, and seeing a stranger standing there, hesitated; then, as the stranger did not speak, she drew back and said, in her imperfect English, "If it is my father monsieur seeks, he is not at home."

"I seek mademoiselle," said Nelson, in French.

Marie drew back still farther: the voice seemed familiar; where had she heard it? "Sir," she said, "I am alone, and—"

"Do not fear my intrusion; Mademoiselle Boncœur has no more respectful friend and servant than myself."

The tones of his voice, his respectful manner, reassured Marie. She reflected a moment, and then said, "Monsieur will pardon my forgetfulness; but I do not recollect where we have met."

"Permit me then to recall it to you: it was in the governor's room of the Château Angoulême."

"*Ah, mon Dieu!* then it must be the Chevalier Nelson, to whom we all owe so much!" exclaimed Marie, retreating still farther.

"Shall I come in, mademoiselle?" asked the young man.

Marie had dropped into a chair and buried her face in her hands. Nelson leaned against the jamb of the door, twirling his hat uneasily in his own. He waited a moment; then, seeing that she did not speak, said, "Mademoiselle, my presence causes you painful recollections. Would it were not so! Still, I have a debt to pay; a debt to you, mademoiselle. Have you forgotten it?"

"Forgotten!" echoed Marie, raising her beautiful head. "One does not so easily forget the little good chance has permitted us to do in this world. I was thanking Heaven, that has so wonderfully restored you to friends and country."

"When we parted—forgive me if the remembrance of that hour pains

you—you said, 'Do not forget, sir, that you stand engaged to Marie Boncœur for your liberty.' Mademoiselle, you were my savior. I have come to redeem my pledge," said Nelson, advancing a step.

"Ah, sir," sighed Marie, "why recall that painful scene? The debt you speak of has been most honorably discharged. We are your debtors, monsieur; not you ours."

"Because I do not wish to forget," ejaculated Nelson, extending both arms toward Marie in an attitude of supplication. "Do not," he went on—"do not ask me to efface that moment of happiness in which I saw an angel of heaven open my prison door; for indeed you seemed one to the poor prisoner, mademoiselle. To you I owe everything which makes life and liberty worth possessing. Do not refuse my gratitude: let me still be your debtor."

Marie was silent a moment. She then said, "The memory of it is precious; therefore I will guard it to the end of my life. But I fear, sir, your gratitude exaggerates the importance of so simple an act. Will you not come in?" she asked, observing with confusion that she had kept him standing on the threshold. Nelson placed himself near her.

"So," she said, when he was seated, "you are really free at last? What happiness! How you must rejoice!"

"On the contrary, mademoiselle, I am more than ever a prisoner."

Marie looked puzzled. "I do not understand; nevertheless, I thought that with peace—"

Nelson sighed deeply, and gave his companion an expressive look. She heard the sigh, but her head was averted and her eyes did not meet his. "Ah!" thought Nelson, drearily, "if I *could only make her* feel all the strength of my tenderness by a look! I must speak to her. Where are all those fine things you promised yourself to say, coward?"

There is an old saw which says that love is afraid of nothing: it is a mistake—it is afraid of itself. This man, who could face dangers that would appall the weak woman at his side, was mute; on the contrary, the weak woman has always the most courage in such emergencies as that in which Nelson now found himself. The strong, reasoning man must commit himself by some irrevocable act from which he cannot withdraw; but this self-abandonment is often the most potent appeal to woman's generosity. Nelson perceived that Marie had not understood, but waited for him to explain himself; and for him there was only one way to explain. He fell on his knees at her feet. "I dearly love you, mademoiselle!" What could he say more?

At this sudden, and to her totally unexpected, declaration, Marie pushed back her chair, and half rising from it, looked at the suppliant at her feet with an expression impossible to describe.

"Surely, Monsieur Nelson is too honorable a man to insult an unprotected woman!" she hurriedly exclaimed.

"Insult you! I, mademoiselle!" stammered Nelson, like a man who hears without comprehending. "Is the offer of an honorable love so deeply displeasing?" added he, rising, and taking up his hat. "God forgive me!" he burst out, "have I wounded the being I loved best on earth! Do not fear me, mademoiselle," he continued, seeing that she still recoiled from him. "I would lose my head rather than harm should come to a hair of yours."

"Nay, sir," said Marie, in equal agi

tation, "you said but now you were still a prisoner. That miniature!"

A light dawned on Nelson. He gave a sigh of relief. A hurried explanation followed, in which Nelson told the story of his old affection for Lois Erving without reserve. It was now Marie's turn to blush and tremble. She had wronged him, then. Pity, respect, admiration, she already felt; now a sweet exultation possessed every fibre of her being. She was afraid to speak, lest the spell should be broken. There was an embarrassed pause, which Nelson surely misinterpreted. "If you cannot forgive my presumption, say only that I have cleared myself from all except the crime of loving; at least, let me have that assurance ere I depart forever," he implored.

Marie turned half round, so that he could not see her face, but she stretched out her hand toward him and was silent. Nelson seized the hand, covered it with kisses, pressed it to his heart, kissed it again, and would not let it go. "Marie," he whispered, "is it possible, or do I dream?"

"Dear friend," she answered, with swimming eyes, "I am thy prisoner; be thou very merciful unto me."

When Boncœur returned, he found them sitting together. Nelson was trying to comprehend the sudden happiness that had befallen him, Marie absorbed in his every word. He had told her the story of his life, and, listening, she felt that the man was worthy, if ever man was.

The greeting between Boncœur and his guest was a little constrained. The former understood nothing, but he said, "I knew that you were here, for who should pounce upon me at the *door but that coquin* Lafitte. Guess *my astonishment! I* thought the fel*low was at the other* end of France."

"Lafitte!" exclaimed Marie, with an eloquent glance at Nelson. The latter went to the head of the stairs, and called to his servant to come up. The meeting between the faithful domestic and Marie was one which no one could witness unmoved. Lafitte was beside himself with joy.

"Mademoiselle," said Nelson, "I pray you take back Lafitte, for I am convinced he would mope himself to death in my service. Perhaps," he significantly added, "I may reclaim him at no distant day." Marie rewarded him by a smile and a blush; then, divining that her lover had something to say to her father, took Lafitte into the next room.

Boncœur was surprised, but not displeased with the revelation Nelson had to make; but he was a man of method, wedded to forms, and weighed the chances of his daughter's future with the practical eye of the man of business, even while he allowed a tear for the susceptibilities of the parent.

"To-morrow, sir," said Nelson, "my uncle shall call upon you. Have I your consent to become Marie's suitor?"

"*Vraiment*, monsieur," was Père Boncœur's reply; "you do me much honor. Certes," he added, with a cunning smile, and elevating his tufted eyebrows, "either I am much mistaken, or you have already explored your ground with Marie. She has been a priceless treasure to me, and will be so to any man who calls her his."

Nelson then prepared to go. Marie followed him to the door, and gave him her hand.

"What do you think that foolish Lafitte has been saying?" she playfully asked.

"*Ma mie*, I cannot tell: what?"

"He says you are head and ears in love with some one. Great news, was

it not? *Ciel*, how wise he looked!" laughed the happy girl.

"The old sorcerer! Bid him have a care. Our English laws are stringent," said Nelson, kissing the upturned face. Then he took the face between his hands and looked into her eyes. Such a look!

"Dear," said Marie, detaining him, "how cruelly you have suffered!"

"This," said Nelson, caressing the hand he still held fast—"this pays for all."

The day following, Sir Purbeck Temple's coach stopped at the house in the Borough. The baronet was in full dress, and in his most gracious mood. Having saluted M. Boncœur with dignified affability, and offered his snuff-box with the air of a diplomat entering upon a difficult negotiation, he formally demanded the hand of Mademoiselle Marie Boncœur for his nephew and heir, John Nelson.

"You do us much honor," Boncœur had replied; "permit me to present my daughter to the Chevalier Temple."

The baronet touched the tips of Marie's fingers with his lips, and then, forgetting conventionality, folded her in his arms. "You will make him a good wife; I am sure of it," he exclaimed. And Marie replied with simple earnestness, "Please God, sir, I will."

Nelson's exertions through the embassy to France were rewarded by the discovery of his fellow-prisoner in an obscure corner of Paris, where he had remained secreted until the news of peace. His experience at the Bastile had been sufficiently curious. After Nelson was removed, Saint Mars had simply told Alden to go about his business, enjoining him to report his residence to the prefect of police. Hoping to hear some news of his friend, Alden demanded permission to pass the night in the fortress, alleging that he was a stranger in Paris. At this singular request Saint Mars chuckled, but, after a moment's reflection, granted it, and Alden was lodged in an empty cell of the *tour de la Bertaudière*—a great cavern, he said, when describing it to Nelson, sixty feet long, and having a window looking upon the gate and faubourg St. Antoine. Over the fireplace was a portrait of the king. While waiting for the turnkey to release him in the morning, he had amused himself by ornamenting the king's portrait with a pair of horns, a tail, and cloven feet, using the charred end of a fagot for a pencil. His jailer surprised him in the act of writing the inscription, "The French Arms." He had paid for this pleasantry with a week's confinement in the black-hole, after which he was thrust forth to shift for himself. "Curse them!" said the incorrigible Alden, shaking his fist in the direction of the French coast. "I should like one more hack at the cowardly rascals before I die. A plague take the peace, say I!"

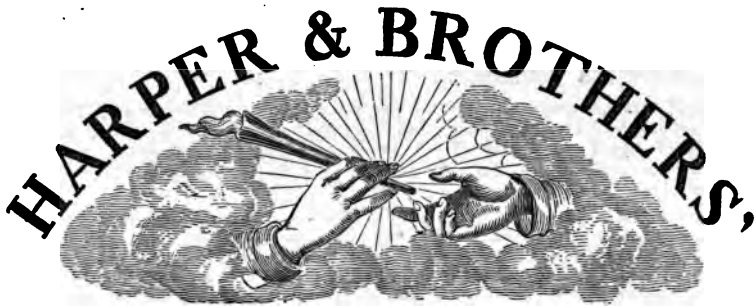
"Nevertheless, it has given you liberty," remarked Nelson.

"Ay, that is something. Poor old Tyng! how he would have rejoiced to see this day!"

Frustrated in her hopes, beaten back upon herself, Lois Erving ceded at last to the importunities of Captain Trefry. She had nursed him in his sickness, and his gratitude was boundless. As the wife of an officer of his majesty's household troops, her position was flattering to her pride and gratifying to her father, even if she felt that she could return her husband's affection with nothing more than sincere esteem. The old wound healed. Time reconciled her with the step she had taken, and

Lois realized at last that if we cannot compel the affections, we may at least find the heart we deemed incapable of change yielding at last to the subtle influence of unselfish and unceasing devotion. If not happiness, she had calm—the prelude to that which passeth all understanding.

THE END.



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